THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

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NOVAK DJOKOVIC

ROLAND GARROS PARIS

DJOKOVIC BEATS TSITSIPAS IN FIVE SETS TO WIN 19TH MAJOR

Novak Djokovic is now just one behind Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal's tally of Grand Slam titles after beating Stefanos Tsitsipas 6-7, 2-6, 6-3, 6-2, 6-4 on Sunday

NOVAK JOINS EMERSON, LAVER IN ELITE CLUB

Novak Djokovic has become just the third man in the game's history after Roy Emerson and Rod Laver to win all four of the Grand Slams at least twice. He is the first in the Open era to achieve the feat. The Serbian has now won the French Open twice, the Australian Open a phenomenal nine times, the Wimbledon on five occasions and the US Open thrice

SERBIAN SCRIPTS HISTORIC COMEBACK

- Novak Djokovic bounced back after losing the first two sets in a Grand Slam final for the first time in his career. This was the sixth instance of Djokovic losing the first two sets in a final
- Runner-up Stefanos Tsitsipas suffered his first defeat after taking a two-set lead in his Grand Slam career

TWO

NUMBER OF FRENCH OPEN TITLES WON BY NOVAK DJOKOVIC

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • WARANGAL • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

G7's big pitch as China's counter for Global South

Modi push for vax patent waiver gets support

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

LEADERS of the Group of Seven (G7) nations on Sunday wrapped up their in-person summit, sending out the message that international cooperation is back on the front burner and that they are a better friend of poorer nations than authoritarian China.

Their pledge of more than 1 billion coronavirus vaccine doses to poorer nations and promises of support for global health, green energy, infrastructure and education, were tailored to underscore their superiority over China's outreach.

On climate change, they launched a 'Build Back Better (B3B) Partnership' plan that promises funds for infrastructure to accelerate the global shift to renewable energy. It's a direct counter to China's Belt and Road initiative that has increased its clout and landed many nations in a debt trap.

The final communique, while reiterating their position on eliminating inefficient fossil fuel subsidies by 2025, committed them to an "end to new direct government support for unabated international thermal coal power generation by the end of 2021".

Addressing an outreach session, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, while urging the G7 to demonstrate leadership, sought their strong support for India and South Africa's proposal for patent waiver for Covid vaccines at the WTO.

Natural ally, says PM

Modi said India is a natural ally for the G7 and its partners in defending democracy, freedom of thought and liberty from threats stemming from authoritarianism, terror, extremism and economic coercion

South Africa's President Ramaphosa echoed Modi's call. Australian premier Scott Morrison referred to his conversation with Modi earlier and expressed his strong support for the patent waiver. Director General of the WTO, Dr Okonjo Iweala, and UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres were on the same page, informed P Harish, additional secretary in the foreign office.

Modi addressed three sessions. The discussions were on three broad tracks: health, vaccines and recovery from Covid; climate change; and open societies and open economies. On climate change, Modi called for collective action, saying that this challenge cannot be addressed in silos. He recalled India's achievements on climate action and said it is the only G20 country on track to meet its Paris commitments, Harish said. P9

Curious case of vax allocation skew in some cities

SANA SHAKIL @ New Delhi

AMID reports of people who fail to get vaccination slots in major cities, traveling to nearby districts and satellite towns for jabs, an interesting correlation of several smaller districts near big urban centres/state capitals being allocated an unusually high percentage of vaccination doses has emerged.

Extensive CoWin app data analysis by this newspaper threw up this interesting phenomenon, but there are no clear answers as to why there is an allocation skew, though several officials confirmed the pattern of people from bigger urban centres going to satellite cities to get vaccinated.

For instance, Meerut in UP, Hooghly and Howrah in West Bengal, Pune in Maharashtra, Alwar in Rajasthan and Panipat in Haryana received more doses than districts with higher population in their respective states. In Meerut, a tier-2 city located 100 kms from Delhi and considered a part of the National Capital Region (NCR), 7.35 lakh doses were administered in a population of 34.43 lakh. However, there are at least 20 districts in UP with higher population that received lesser allocation. Take Sultanpur and Hardoi for example. The two districts have significantly larger population, but received only a third of the doses allocated to Meerut.

Authorities say the situation is similar in Bulandshahar, another UP district adjoining Delhi. According to Bulandshahar district immunisation officer Dr Rohitash Yadav, the trend is most visible in vaccination centres at Khurja, Sikandarabad and Anupshahr. "Almost 15-20% of the beneficiaries in these three towns are actually residents of Delhi, Ghaziabad and Gautam Buddha Nagar. Owing to shortage of slots in areas they live, they are booking slots here," Yadav said.

NATIONWIDE	JUNE 12	JUNE 13
Fresh cases	84,332	80,834
Recoveries	1,21,311	1,32,062
Deaths	4,002	3,303

JAB-O-METER
TAKE YOUR SHOT
June 12 **31,67,961 doses**
June 13 **34,84,239 doses**
TOTAL DOSES: 25,31,95,048

The status is similar in Alwar, falling within the NCR. It reported over 11 lakh vaccinations, which is the second highest in Rajasthan after Jaipur. And Alwar is not the most populous of Rajasthan's 33 districts. CONTINUED ON: P7

Private college chief now RGUHS acting VC; controversy erupts

RANJANI MADHAVAN @ Bengaluru

THE appointment of the principal of a private dental college as acting vice-chancellor of Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences (RGUHS) seems to have upset Health Minister Dr K Sudhakar, who is the pro-chancellor of the university. Some officials attached to the university said the post has never gone to a person from a private institution in its 26-year history.

Dr Jayakara SM, principal, AECS Maruthi College of Dental Sciences, Bengaluru, has been appointed to the post.

Quite surprisingly. Sudhakar has dragged the Governor into the controversy, saying he had sought an appointment with Vajubhai Vala three weeks ago, but was denied because of Covid-related restrictions. Sudhakar said he will discuss the issue with the Governor and Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa.

Sources said that the CBI had raided Dr Jayakara in 2013 when he was an executive member of the Dental Council of India.

Dr Jayakara said, "The case was against two people from the Dental Council of India from Chennai. There was no FIR or chargesheet against my name."

New cases at 7K mark, but mortality high

Positivity rate still a concern

Some districts continue to see a high positivity rate. Analysis of the week's state war room data shows Chikkamagaluru's positivity rate at 17.32%, followed by Dakshina Kannada with 15.67%, and Mysuru at 14.62%.

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

THERE has been a drop in fresh Covid-19 cases in Karnataka bringing relief, but at the rising mortality rate remains a worry. The state's mortality rate went up to 1.19 per cent with 125 fatalities, taking the toll to 32,913.

Health officials said the mortality rate is increasing as the growth rate in the Covid tally is reducing, even as the state continues to report 100-plus deaths every day.

This is also linked to a reduction in the number of tests conducted in a day. The number of tests has dropped to 1,29,617. On Saturday, 9,785 cases were reported with 1,48,027 tests. From June 9-11, the number of tests conducted were over 1.60 lakh. On June 9, up to 1,63,962 tests were conducted; the following day saw 1,67,731 tests; and June 11,1,69,695 tests. But the number dropped to 1,48,027 on Saturday, and saw a further drop to 1,29,617 on Sunday.

Mortality rate is calculated as the percentage of deaths to the total number of cases. The State Government's goal is to bring down the mortality rate below 1 per cent.

KARNATAKA	JUNE 12	JUNE 13
Fresh cases	9,785	7,810
Recoveries	21,614	18,648
Deaths	144	125

On the brighter side, Karnataka on Sunday reported the lowest addition of Covid cases in a day in over two months, with 7,810 added to the tally. This is the lowest addition since April 7, when 6,976 cases were added. Active cases, too, continued to decline, standing at 1,80,835, down from 1,91,796 on Saturday. The Covid-19 tally in Karnataka is 27,65,134, up from 27,57,324 the previous day. The state's positivity rate has been falling consistently from June 9 from 8.79 per cent to 8.73 per cent on Sunday.

EXPRESS READ

Netanyahu reign ends, Bennett new Israel PM

Jerusalem: Naftali Bennett was on Sunday sworn in as Israel's new Prime Minister, ousting Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu from power after an uninterrupted 12 years at the helm of affairs. His government has 27 ministers. P9

Eriksen had cardiac arrest, was gone: Doc

ASSOCIATED PRESS
@ Copenhagen

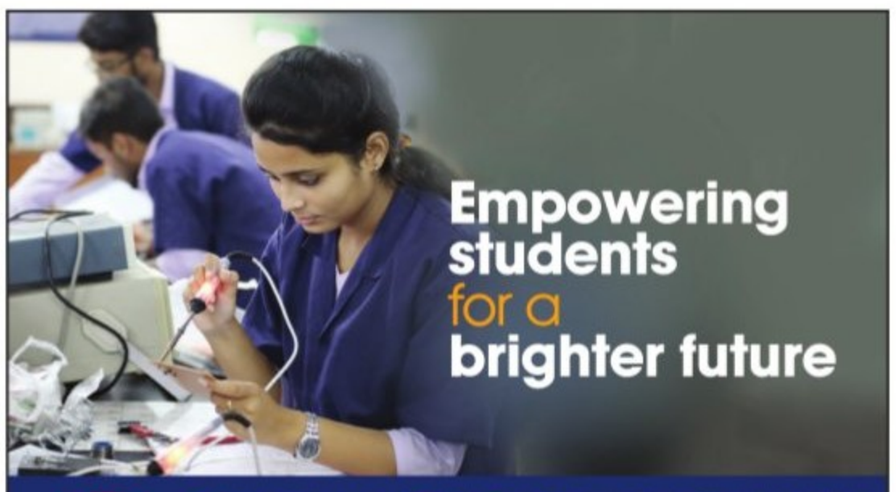
DENMARK'S team doctor said Sunday that Christian Eriksen's heart stopped and that "he was gone" before being resuscitated with a defibrillator at the European Championship.

Eriksen collapsed during Denmark's opening Euro 2020 group game against Finland on Saturday and was given medical treatment before regaining consciousness.

"He was gone. And we did cardiac resuscitation. And it was cardiac arrest," said team doctor Morten Boesen.

Eriksen was in stable condition at a Copenhagen hospital and had spoken to teammates via video link on Sunday, team officials said. P11

WITH THIS ISSUE
THE ESSENTIAL CAMPUS DIGEST edex
28 PAGES, INCLUDING 16 PAGES AND 4 OF TABLOID



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- Number of companies visited - 110
- Highest Salary Offered - 31 Lakh
- Companies offering more than 10 LPA - 21

Highlighted Recruiters
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LIC/PRA/20-21/25/Eng

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

BENGALURU

ALMANAC TODAY
Monday : 14/06/2021 • Year: Plava • Ayana: Uttharayana
Ritu: Greeshma • Masa: Jyeshta • Paksha: Shukla • Tithi: Chaturthi 7.16 pm
Nakshatra: Pushyami 6.06 pm • Moon in Simha Rashi • Rahukaala: 07:30 am to 09:00 am
Gulikakala: 01:30 pm to 03:00 pm • Yamaganda: 10:30 am to 12:00 pm

WEATHER
MIN 21°C | MAX 26°C
FORECAST
Light showers. Overcast

Sunrise 5.53 am
Sunset 6.46 pm
Moonrise 8.59 am
Moonset 10.09 pm

02 BENGALURU | MONDAY 14.06.2021 | newindianexpress.com

RUSH FOR COVER

A view of Tumkur Road as light rainfall washed parts of the city on Sunday | SHRIRAM BN

JUMBO DISCUSSION AROUND NAMES OF ELEPHANTS

BOSKY KHANNA @ Bengaluru

WHILE the names of Abhimanyu, Bheema or Arjuna, the famous captured camp tuskers, had already caught the attention of photographers, foresters and conservationists, the names being given to some infamous wild elephants are raising eyebrows.

In the recent elephant capture operation at Sakleshpur, activists' attention shifted from rescue and rehabilitation efforts, to the names being used to refer to the animals. Activists reportedly heard the foot-patrolling team calling out: "Mountain and Gunda caught...!" While some conservationists are against naming of wildlife, others defend the staffers in this case that it is their way of easy identification for capture or tracking. Watchers and patrolling teams also use such names while sending SMS alerts to counterparts and locals, informing them of herd movement.

It was the foresters in Hassan division who had named the two notorious tuskers, which were captured on Thursday. "Twenty-year-old Mountain got his name not because of his size, but since he was first sighted in conflict near a mountain, while 30-year-old Gunda, simply means round," explained a senior Forest Department official.

Staffers have also named the three radio-collared herd heads. The first elephant to be radio-collared is known as 'Old Belt', the second is called 'Beetamma', and third is 'Bhuvaneshwari'. These three were radio-collared in January. "So instead of saying, a herd led by a radio-collared (date and collar number) elephant is moving, we simply say 'Old Belt' is moving. Since her herd details are known, communication and action are quick," the official added.

In the recent elephant capture operation at Sakleshpur, activists' attention shifted from rehabilitation efforts, to the names being used to refer to elephants

Fortis Hospital doctors to take to streets today

After assault on doctor, nurse, protest to condemn violence against health workers

IFFATH FATHIMA @Bengaluru

FOLLOWING the recent assault on a doctor at Fortis Hospital on Bannerghatta Road, the hospital staff have decided to take out a protest rally on Monday to condemn increasing incidences of violence against medical practitioners.

Healthcare workers are working under immense stress to take care of patients and save lives in the pandemic crisis, but they are also being increasingly targeted by families of patients who succumb to Covid. The Fortis incident, wherein the son of a patient assaulted a doctor and a nurse, is the most recent example.

Dr Padmakumar AV, Senior Consultant, Critical Care Medicine, Fortis Hospital, who was attacked, said that the problem needs to be addressed at the roots. He pointed out that such incidents are very rare in most developed countries and felt that it was a social problem in India. "In my over 30-year experience, I am seeing this problem increase in the past 10 to 15 years. Unfortunately, such incidents have become an occupational hazard," he told *The New Indian Express*.

He added that if the doctor mentions death of a patient, the relatives find it very difficult to accept it even for a very critical and dying patient. "If a patient gets better, it is God's miracle. But if the patient dies, it is the doctor's fault!" he rued. "So, in my opinion, rather than anything personal, there is definitely a social angle to this issue. Until and unless we try to address the root cause, there will not be an end to the problem. I definitely condemn any kind of violence against anyone."

Meanwhile, the Indian Medical Association (IMA) will organise a nationwide protest on June 18 to condemn violence against doctors.

"These incidents are creating fear. Health workers are on the forefront of the pandemic battle, putting their lives at risk and working in critical areas. But still they have to face this. Despite laws to curb such crimes, they are not being implemented," a member of IMA, Karnataka chapter, said.

'Sanchari' Vijay critical after bike skids

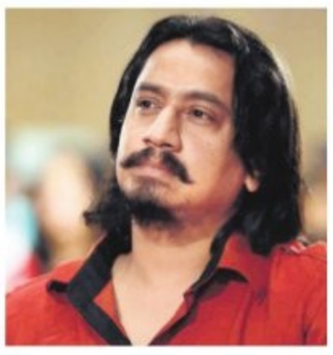
EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

NATIONAL Award winning Kannada film actor 'Sanchari' Vijay is critical after he sustained a grievous head injury in a road accident late Saturday night. The actor underwent brain surgery and is in a coma.

Vijay (37), of 'Naanu Avanalla Avalu' fame, is a resident of Bannerghatta Road. He was riding pillion with his friend Naveen, and both were injured after the bike reportedly skidded. Jayanagar traffic police, who registered a case, said the incident occurred near L&T South City apartments in JP Nagar 7th Phase, around 11.45pm.

"As per the preliminary probe, Vijay had gone to a friend's house and was returning home with Naveen. It was a self-accident as the bike skidded. While Naveen sustained a fracture, Vijay sustained a severe head injury as he hit an electric pole," police said, adding that both were immediately rushed to a private hospital on Bannerghatta Road.

Dr Arun L Naik, senior consultant and neurosurgeon, Apollo Hospitals, said, "The patient was unconscious when brought to hospital. A CT scan showed severe brain injury in addition to subdural hematoma (bleeding) in the right part of the brain. We completed the operation by early morning. He is on ventilator support in the



neuro ICU, and will be under observation for 48 hours as he continues to be in coma and is critical. His right thigh is fractured. Other functions are normal."

Naveen sustained a spinal injury and is undergoing treatment, but is said to be out of danger. Film director Mansore, who visited Vijay, said, "He is under observation. His pulse and BP are normal. He has undergone surgery and anaesthesia might be the reason for his unconscious state. Thankfully, he was taken to hospital immediately and is responding to treatment."

Vijay's brother Sudesh said he heard about the accident around 12.30am. "We don't know where he had gone and with whom, and also who shifted them to hospital. He (Vijay) was active in Covid relief work and I request people to pray for his speedy recovery."

Several film personalities, including Neenasam Satish, visited the hospital and enquired about Vijay.

Major water shutdown across city on Wednesday

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

WEST, South and North Bengaluru will face an 18-hour water disruption from 6 am to midnight on Wednesday (June 16) due to infrastructure works being carried out by the BWSSB and other utility agencies.

Some of the areas that will be affected are: KP Agrahara, New Binny Layout, Chamarajpet, Padarayanapura, Vidyapeeta, Kathriguppe, Thyagarajanagar, Basavanagudi, Mount Joy Extension, Ashoknagar, Banashankari, Srinagara, Kumaraswamy Layout, ISRO Layout, Austin Town, Ejipura, Richmond Town, MG Road, Domlur, HAL, Kodihalli, Hanumanthappa Layout, Halasuru, Adugodi, Jayanagar, Tilak Nagar, Bhovi Colony, Koramangala, Madivala, Telecom Layout, Byatarayanapura, VV Puram, JJR Nagar, Janata Colony, Jayanagar, Yediyur, Teacher's Colony, Lingarajapura, Indiranagar, Gandhinagar, Devagiri, Maruti Sevanagar Janakiram Layout, Frazer Town, Cottonpet, New Guddadahalli, Seshadripuram Siddaramappa Garden and surrounding areas.

IT firm to set up flying school in Belagavi

S LALITHA @Bengaluru

FOR those aspiring for an aviation career, a big opportunity is opening up in North Karnataka with a Bengaluru-based IT firm gearing up to set up a flying training school in Belagavi.

The mood is completely upbeat at the firm, Samvardhana Technologies Pvt Ltd in Rajaji Nagar, with its director, 52-year-old B G Kumaraswamy, a glider and private pilot, relieved that an ambition he had nursed since 2005 is finally set to be realised.

The school will come up inside the Belagavi Airport

The school will come up on 5,000 sqmt inside the Belagavi Airport. A second such school will be set up here by the Delhi-based RedBird Aviation.

Kumaraswamy told TNIE that his firm was in the process of procuring six training aircraft. The organization is likely to spend anywhere between Rs 10 and Rs 15 crore to put in place a hangar, maintenance facility, classrooms and an administrative building inside the airport. "We are looking at making it operational in a year's time from now," Kumaraswamy said.

A PUC (with Science as a subject) is the minimum qualification for admission. The fee is likely to be between Rs 35 lakh and Rs 40 lakh a student. The company has applied for a new name for its school and is awaiting the clearance, he added.

Daily Starscope

PETER VIDAL

14th June: According to one of my old books, Monday is special to that delightful flower, the Tigerlily. And, if you're wondering, tomorrow's flower is the Hollyhock and Wednesday's is the Bluebell. Not all these flowers grow everywhere and I've no idea who created these associations, but why quibble? Flowers are good things no matter what the day!

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr. 20)
You have been through a great deal, but you still can't tell where you're really heading. Give yourself another week or so if you wish to wait until life has calmed down. Expect major changes at work very soon, perhaps because people around you are coming and going without warning.

TAURUS (Apr. 21 - May 21)
Remember all those times when you have longed to treat yourself, but have been unable to for one reason or another. Your stars are once again perfectly placed, and over the next forty-eight hours you may indulge your every whim, responsibilities permitting.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)
Other people are making demands which you may feel unwilling or unable to fulfil. You might imagine that you have been swamped by the need for urgent decisions. Over the next few days you may realise that spending or investment plans should be completely revised and revalued.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)
A remarkable change will begin to take place over the next few days. Close partnerships are bound to be the vital factor, but the focus may be either at work, at home or even in affairs of the heart. You'll be reassessing your closest relationships, looking anew at what you really want from other people.

LEO (July 24 - Aug. 23)
An approaching metaphorical collision between the Sun and the Moon may leave you feeling considerably the worse for wear. You may, if you wish, burn the candle at both ends and push yourself to the limit, but you must accept the consequences. My advice would be to take whatever rest and relaxation you require.

VIRGO (Aug. 24 - Sept. 23)
The coming days will be quite important in a number of respects. Remember everything I have said over the past weeks and months about the need to be more spontaneous, creative and passionate. It is time to stand up for yourself and stop other people putting you down.

LIBRA (Sept. 24 - Oct. 23)
The stars are in a challenging but friendly mood, and you may start the day in an impetuous frame of mind, determined to do what suits you whether others like it or not. It may be four or five days - or longer - before your clarity of vision is restored.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 - Nov. 22)
Others may be complaining about the state of their fortunes and the general condition of the world. However, I don't think you have any time to indulge in that favourite complaint, grumbling. You're the person who can point out to other people just how positive the times really are.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23 - Dec. 22)
This is unlikely to be an easy time, but you may still have it easier than most. You may not be surprised to hear that the main area of danger is financial but, if you move cautiously, great profit is to be had. It's all a matter of careful timing.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 23 - Jan. 20)
A mischievous planetary alignment may throw you completely off course. However, even if you do suffer a setback, once you pick yourself up you will realise that you have gained a great deal in terms of maturity and experience. Even a failure will tell you where your limits lie.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 - Feb. 19)
You are in the happy position of being subject to only slight problems at a time when some people are being completely hammered. You may have one or two vague suspicions, but there's nothing to worry about. However, if you do need reassurance, then be sure to ask for it.

PISCES (Feb. 20 - Mar 20)
Time is a most precious commodity. It's not that you have too much of it, or too little, but that you have to decide how to use it wisely. Don't be concerned by what other people are doing, but set your own schedule. Every minute and every hour is there for your benefit.

THE PHANTOM

NO NEED TO COME RUNNING HOME ON MY ACCOUNT...
BY THE TIME YOU READ THIS LETTER, I'LL HAVE BEATEN THIS STUPID NOMAD NIGHTMARE.
JUST LIKE I BEAT THE NOMAD! BEAT HIM LIKE A BANDAR DRUM! HA HA!
BUT I ALREADY TOLD YOU THAT STORY...
Falk

HI AND LOIS

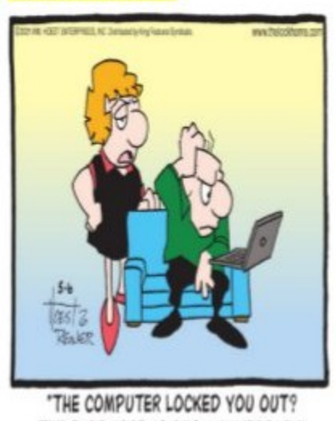
BEETLE BAILEY

WOW, ZERO! OUT OF TEN SHOTS, YOU GOT TEN BULLSEYES!
WE USED TO SHOOT CANS OFF THE FENCE ALL THE TIME ON THE FARM
I CAN PUT A BULLET THROUGH A BUTTON AT 30 PACES
IF THE ENEMY IS SMART THEY'LL HAVE UNIFORMS WITH ZIPPERS

BLONDIE

LOU, THIS SPAGHETTI SAUCE TASTES A LITTLE DIFFERENT THAN USUAL TODAY
I KNOW. IT'S BECAUSE OF THE WINE
YOUR COOK ADDS WINE TO THE RECIPE NOW?
ONLY IF HE HAS SOME LEFT OVER AFTER HIS BREAK

LOCKHORNS



DENNIS THE MENACE

SUDOKU

Easy: Test your number crunching skill with our unique puzzle

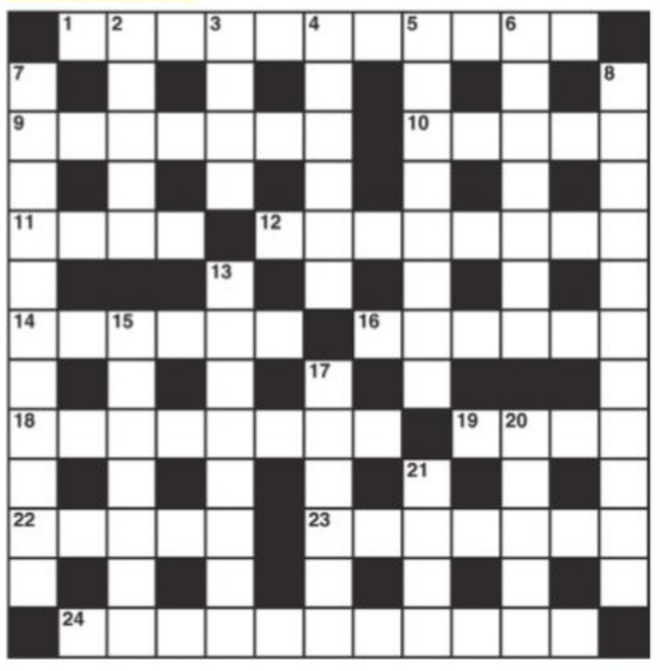
Fill in the grid with digits in such a manner that every row, every column and every 3X3 box accommodates the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.

9		3	4	5		2		
	6			3	7		4	
			1					
4		7	2	6	3	9		
8				1				2
		1	5	8	9	4		6
					1			
	8		6	9			3	
		9		4	2	7		5

Solutions to Saturday's puzzle

3	1	9	6	5	2	7	8	4
8	6	7	4	1	9	2	3	5
5	4	2	3	7	8	9	6	1
4	5	8	9	3	7	1	2	6
2	9	1	5	4	6	8	7	3
6	7	3	8	2	1	4	5	9
1	3	6	2	8	4	5	9	7
7	2	5	1	9	3	6	4	8
9	8	4	7	6	5	3	1	2

CROSS WORD



ACROSS

1 Dictatorial soldiers in khaki for example (11)
9 Gapes at spectacles (7)
10 A pie is turned a fine shade of brown (5)
11 Record a piece of music (4)
12 I drag gun out for protection (8)
14 Plant one hundred and fifty too many (6)
16 Cold tart (6)
18 Make a suit? (8)
19 Temperature in the freezer ordinarily (4)
22 A poisonous creeper (5)
23 This is irritating for sightseers, naturally (7)
24 Way that is perfectly clear (5,6)

DOWN

2 Sense of anxiety possibly nags the third mate (5)
3 Do nothing in mid Lent (4)
4 An even chance the matador will try to avoid (4-2)
5 Stop and relax with a shower (8)
6 Fix a quiet spot (7)
7 Most appealing feature of a newspaper perhaps (5,6)
8 Supplementary benefit for workers lacking security (6,5)
13 Cloth worker; one in a mess (8)
15 Choose one mother - the best (7)
17 A problem for the bridge-builder to emphasise (6)
20 Run away from East European uprising (5)
21 When it falls it has the cheek to goon (4)

SATURDAY'S SOLUTIONS

Across: 1 Stifle, 4 Acrimony, 9 Ordain, 10 Estrange, 12 Digs, 13 Relay, 14 Arid, 17 Wonderstruck, 20 Numismatists, 23 Noon, 24 Cairo, 25 Loaf, 28 Insomnia, 29 Senior, 30 Gremlins, 31 Pounce.

Down: 1 Slowdown, 2 Indigent, 3 Laid, 5 Casual remark, 6 In re, 7 Owners, 8 Yields, 11 Perspiration, 15 He tup, 16 Scott, 18 Estonian, 19 Use force, 21 Ending, 22 Mousse, 26 Emil, 27 Veto.

JUMBLE By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

HEWIG

DEUSE

ETMIDU

ROLDAL

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Jack of diamonds! It looks like my lucky day, Jim.
For the last time, it's James!
4/16
THE POKER PLAYER GOT THE CARD HE NEEDED FOR A ROYAL FLUSH, WHICH ---

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon

ANSWERS TOMORROW

SATURDAY'S: **Jumbles:**
DAILY STAND SETTLE RANCID
ANSWER: His old fishing pole was no longer usable, so he – CAST IT ASIDE

Arun Singh to meet ministers first

Legislators, cadres prepare list of complaints against CM, government

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

AFTER weeks of political drama over leadership change and power transition in the State, BJP's in-charge general secretary for Karnataka Arun Singh is scheduled to pay a visit this week.

Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa on Sunday said Singh, who will arrive on Wednesday, will stay put for two or three days to engage with all stakeholders.

Sources close to the CM said Yediyurappa was hoping for leadership change murmurs to end once for all after Singh's visit. Sources suggested that a section of MLAs, office-bearers and cadres are also preparing a list of complaints against the government and Yediyurappa, to be presented before Singh.

Meanwhile, MLA Arvind Bellad was said to have met BJP National General Secretary (Organisation) BL Santhosh, expressing concern over fair play when Singh meets the MLAs. The worry, it is said, stems from Singh shooting down talks of change in leadership last week, even before speaking with MLAs and party leaders. Earlier this week, Singh had said there was no question of Yediyurappa resigning from his post, and that he would continue in office for the next two years.

Arun Singh

"Arun Singh will be in Karnataka for two or three days. It is his duty to hold meetings and take stock of the situation. I welcome him and I will be here to cooperate with him," Yediyurappa told reporters.

Singh's visit comes after the party's chief whip in the legislative assembly, Sunil Kumar, tweeted, urging the party to provide an internal platform for MLAs to voice concerns, since many were not in support of making public statements.

'Go Back, Singh' call on cards

BANSY KALAPPA @ Bengaluru

FRESH on the heels of BJP General Secretary in-charge of Karnataka Arun Singh stating that CM BS Yediyurappa will complete his term in office, comes a new twist. Yediyurappa's detractors are now turning their guns on Arun Singh himself.

When Singh arrives here on Wednesday, he is scheduled to interact with cabinet ministers before he meets legislators. A group comprising MLAs Basanagouda Yatnal, Arvind Bellad and GH Thippareddy, minister CP Yogeshwara, Chief Whip Sunil Kumar and a few others plan to insist that Singh should call for a Legislative Party meet first. Singh had suggested that he would first meet the ministers and if necessary, call an LP meeting. The group is apprehensive that Singh may not choose to hold the meeting, which would mean an end to their planning, and are even ready to start a 'Go Back, Arun Singh' campaign.

They want to ask Singh who had authorised him to tell the media that Yediyurappa would remain CM for two more years, and if so, what is the purpose of his visit.

KPCC chief DK Shivakumar at a protest in Mahadevapura, Bengaluru, on Sunday | EXPRESS

Strip cops of stars, give them BJP badges, says angry DKS

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

KARNATAKA Pradesh Congress President DK Shivakumar on Sunday lashed out at the State government after local police attempted to stall a food kit donation drive in Mahadevapura. "Strip down the stars on police uniform and instead give them BJP badges and flags," Shivakumar mocked the government, after local police tried to stall the drive and dismantle the stage with Congress party hoardings and flags, purportedly on the "instructions of the minister". Minister Arvind Limbavali is the local MLA.

Shivakumar lashed out at police and the BJP government for attempting to stall an event aimed at helping the poor. "BJP leaders use government money on relief items, and put up photos of themselves and PM Modi, but all the relief material being given by us comes from hard-earned money of Congress leaders and cadres. Our party leaders are using their personal funds to help the poor, and this government is not able to stand it," he said.

The Karnataka unit of the Congress continued its protest against rising fuel and food prices on Sunday, at multiple village panchayat and district panchayat levels. Shivakumar joined the protests in Tumakuru to mark the third day of their five-day protest. Meanwhile, in a parallel effort, other Congress leaders, including working presidents Ramalinga Reddy and Saleem Ahmed, presided over ration kit donation camps in Bengaluru.

Party leaders across the State have been dividing their time between agitations and donation camps over the past few days, in a two-pronged offensive against the BJP government at the Centre and State.

Shivakumar interacted with party cadres across the State via video conference, from former DyCM Dr Parameshwara's residence in Tumakuru, before proceeding to protest sites. By Sunday evening, he was back in Bengaluru to distribute ration and medicine kits to people from economically vulnerable sections. "Donation drives are being organised in all 224 constituencies across the State, and our leaders are using their personal funds to help the poor, who are already burdened by rising food and fuel prices," said Saleem Ahmed.

EXPRESS READ

Good rain this year too, dams filling up, says CM

Shivamogga: Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa said the state is expected to receive good rainfall this year too. He told reporters in Shikaripura on Sunday that rain has started, and dams are getting filled. "Just like last year, we can expect good crops this year too. I hope the rain will bring good times for farmers," he said.

The CM said those who do not have permanent shelter will be given housing facilities in the next two years. He requested those who do not have their own houses to apply for housing schemes. Meanwhile, the CM said that discussions are being held to take action against Bangladeshis staying illegally in the state.

Get medicine, stop black fungus deaths, demands Oppn

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

WITH the number of black fungus deaths in the State on the rise, the opposition Congress and JDS have asked the government to wake up and procure the medicine, Liposomal Amphotericin B, immediately. They alleged that deaths were due to non-availability of this critical drug.

Former Chief Minister HD Kumaraswamy said, "It is a serious issue, the government needs to get the requisite medicine immediately. It is four weeks now, I had warned the government about this well in advance."

Bengaluru Rural MP D K Suresh blamed Health Minister Dr K Sudhakar. "There is no stock of the medicine and manufacturing will take time. The state authorities said they are waiting for supplies from the Central government, but it is four weeks since mucormycosis numbers have increased, and the government has not given sufficient vials of medicine to patients. Congress MLA Ranganath Doddaiah, a medical professional, has demanded that the government release facts about how many were diagnosed with mucormycosis, how many were treated, how many have died and other official details. He alleged that there is a serious lapse on the part of the government as medicines are not available in sufficient numbers.

Ranganath, who has taken on Sudhakar on this issue, demanded transparency. He said patients have died because of shortage of medicines, delay in diagnosis and lack of awareness. JDS deputy leader in the Assembly Bandeppa Kashempur said, "Black fungus cases have increased and so have fatalities. It has been four weeks since this fatal fungal infection was discovered but the government has done very little to get the medicines."

JDS state president H K Kumaraswamy said the government has to ensure the medicines are available.

SAD DEMISE

Sri V.N. Satyanarayana

Freedom Fighter, Renowned Advocate, A beloved Parent, a Friend of All. Left for heavenly abode on 10.6.2021.

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Relatives & Friends.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

My clients **Sri. Dilip Kumar P. S/o. Sri. Kendaiah and Smt. Ramya M., W/o. Sri Dilip Kumar P.,** Both are R/at No.6/1, Muneshwara Temple Street, near Jinke Park, Vital Nagar, Chamrajpete, Bengaluru-560018, proposed to purchase the schedule property from Smt. R. Lalitha, W/o. Sri. V. Radhakrishnan, R/at No. 1014/2, 17th 'C' Cross, Indiranagar 2nd Stage, Benglauru-560038. That if any person/s, Bank/s, Authorities has/have any objections for the proposed sale transactions or claims any kind whatsoever on the schedule property may lodge their claims/objections with documentary proof within (7) Seven days from the date of publication of this notice with the undersigned, failing which thereafter my clients shall proceed to complete the sale transaction and any claims received thereafter will not be entertained.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of Property bearing Site No.634, B.B.M.P Khatha No.2833/2756/634/28/2, layout formed in Sy.Nos.91/2, 99/1, 99/2, 99/3, 101/2, 140, 141, 142, 173, 174, 175, 178, 180, 181, 182, 184, 188, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 207, 208, 210, 211, 317/1B, 217/2, 218/1, 218/2, 219, 220, 223/2, 223/1, 223/3, 224/1, 224/2, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229/1, 229/2, 230 and 241 of Halagevaderahalli, Kengeri Hobli, Bengaluru Taluk, by BEML Employees Co-Operative Housing Society Ltd., V Stage Rajarajeshwarinagar, Bengaluru, now comes under B.B.M.P Limits, measuring East to West 45 feet and North to South 39.6+39 feet in all measuring 196.25 sq yards and bounded on East by: Site No.655, West by: Road, North by: Road, South by: Site No.635.

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No.29/30, 58th Cross, 4th Block, Rajajinagar, Bangalore-560010
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Sl. No.	Description of Work & Notice Inviting Expression of Interest (EOI) No.	Date of Availability of EOI Tender Document in Website as well as CPP Portal	Last Date of Bid Submission (ON-LINE)
1.	Renovation & Infrastructure Re-Development including Civil, PHE, Electrical and Landscaping Work etc. of Maa Biraja Temple Complex at Jajpur, Odisha. (EOI No. B&R / HO / DMFT / 51207 / MAA-BIRAJA-TEMPLE / JAJPUR / EOI / CW / 01)	14.06.2021	28.06.2021
2.	Construction of Knowledge Park including Building Work, Water Body Beautification Work, Fountain and others Allied Work, Landscaping, Horticulture, Plumbing, External and Internal Electrical Work, CCTV , Civil works for Monuments, Boundary Wall, Pathway & Paving and Sculpture work at Sathipur Jajpur Block, Jajpur, Odisha. (EOI No. B&R / HO / DMFT / 51207 / KNOWLEDGE-PARK / JAJPUR / EOI / CW / 01)	14.06.2021	28.06.2021
3.	Reclamation and Peripheral Development of Kantigadia Bada Pokhari Pond including Ground work of Water Body - Dewatering, Retaining Wall / Protection Wall / Stone Pitching, Building Work, Landscaping Work, Fountain Work, Plumbing, Electrical Work and Boundary Wall, Pathway & Paving under Dharmasala Tahasil at Jajpur, Odisha. (EOI No. B&R / HO / DMFT / 51207 / KANTIGADIA-BADA-POKHARI-POND / JAJPUR / EOI / CW / 01)	15.06.2021	29.06.2021
4.	Construction of Jajpur Mission Haat including Building Work, PHE, Electrification Work, Car Parking, Entrance Gate, Pathway, Boundary Wall, Water Supply, Sanitation and External Sewerage System, Landscaping Work at Sathipur, Jajpur, Odisha. (EOI No. B&R / HO / DMFT / 51207 / MISSION-HAAT / JAJPUR / EOI / CW / 01)	15.06.2021	29.06.2021

Interested Bidder(s) will have to be enrolled & registered with the Government e-Procurement System; through logging on to https://eprocure.gov.in.
Addendum / Corrigendum, if any, shall be hosted in Company's Website: www.bridgeroof.co.in and CPP portal : https://eprocure.gov.in only.

PUBLIC NOTICE-AUCTION CUM SALE OF PROPERTIES
Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrowers and Guarantors that the below described immovable properties mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of **Asset Reconstruction Company India Ltd (Arcil)** an Asset Reconstruction Company registered with Reserve Bank of India under the provisions of the SARFAESI Act, 2002. **Arcil** has acquired from the banks / financial institutions mentioned below the financial assets and has acquired the rights of the Secured Creditor.The assets will be sold on on **"As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" basis** as per the brief particulars given hereunder as per below mentioned schedule:

Sr. No.	Loan Account Number / Name of Bank	Name of Original Borrower/Co-Borrower/ Guarantor	Trust Name	Type/ Size in/ Nature of Property	Total dues Outstanding in INR	Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) in INR	Reserve Price in INR	Date of Inspection	Date and Time of Auction	Type of Possession
1	DRHLBLR00420712 / Development Credit Bank Ltd.	Guru Charan Goswami / Binarani Goswami	Arcil-Retail Loan Portfolio-022-A-Trust	Land: N.A. Sq.Feet Const/Flat: 1065 Sq.Feet [Freehold]	38,88,267.14 as on 11/06/2021	1,30,000/-	13,00,000/-	21/06/2021	30/06/2021 11:00 AM	Physical
	Property Description/Schedule:- Flat No.102 First Floor, Akruthi Apartment, Site No.163, Khatha No.10/163, Sy.No.8, Chikkadunnasandra Village, Yamare Grama Panchayat, Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore Karnataka.									
2	404SHL34378142& 404SHL34378314 / Bajaj Finance Ltd.	Navajeeth N	Arcil-Retail Loan Portfolio-042-C-Trust	Land: N.A. Sq.Feet Const/Flat: 840 Sq.Feet [Freehold]	36,03,772.90 as on 11/06/2021	1,60,000/-	16,00,000/-	21/06/2021	30/06/2021 12:30 PM	Physical
	Property Description/Schedule:- Flat No.202, Second Floor, "Pristine Srikrishna-II" Apartment, In Converted Property Bearing Sy.No.50/2, Property No. 7449/50/2, Situated At Kammasandra Village, Attibele Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore, Karnataka									

Important Information regarding Auction Process

1	Auction Date	As prescribed herein above	5	Last date for Submission of EMD	Same day 2 hour before Auction
2	Place for Submission of Bids and Place of Auction	Unit No.305, 3rd Floor, Kedia Arcade, # 92, Infantry Road, Bangalore-560001.	6	All payments including EMD to be made by way of Demand Draft payable at	Bangalore
	Bids can be submitted online / in person depending upon the Covid situation in Branch locality. kamal.mishra@arcil.co.in, satheesh.r@arcil.co.in, shivshankar.ub@arcil.co.in		7	Name in whose favour Demand Drafts to be drawn	The name as shown in Trust Column against each property.
3	Web-Site For Auction	www.arcil.co.in	8	Time of Inspection	Between 11.00 am to 3.00 pm Note: Date & time of inspection may be changed in view of Covid-19 situation
4	Contact Persons with Phone Number	Kamal Mishra / Satheesh / Shivashankar UB 9819820760 / 9738141146 / 8073722285			

* A bidder may, on his own choice, avail the facility of online participation in the auction by making application in prescribed format which is available along with the offer/ tender document on the website address mentioned herein above. Online bidding will take place at website of organisation as mentioned herein above, and shall be subject to the terms and conditions contained in the tender document. The Tender Document and detailed Terms & Conditions for the Auction may be downloaded from our website **www.arcil.co.in** or the same may also be collected from the concerned Branch office of **Arcil** as stated above. Please note that sale shall be subject to the terms and conditions as stated in the Bid Document. Sale is strictly subject to terms and conditions incorporated in this advertisement and the prescribed Bid/Tender Document. The Authorized Officer reserves the right to reject any/all bids without assigning any reason. This notice is also to be treated as a notice under Rule 8 and 9 of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002.

Date: 14/06/2021
Place: Bangalore

Sd/- Authorized Officer,
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TRACKING COVID-19

SPEED AND RISE OF COVID-19 CASES IN KARNATAKA

7,810 CASES REPORTED TODAY

9,785 CASES REPORTED YESTERDAY

TALLY STANDS AT

TODAY	27,65,134
YESTERDAY	27,57,324

DEATHS

TODAY	YESTERDAY
125	144

DISCHARGES

TODAY	YESTERDAY
18,648	21,614

ACTIVE CASES

TODAY	YESTERDAY
1,80,835	1,91,796

POSITIVITY RATE

TODAY	8.73%
YESTERDAY	8.76%

The day positivity rate – 6.02% is calculated as the number of patients testing positive out of 100 tests conducted only in a day.

MORTALITY RATE

TODAY	1.19%
YESTERDAY	1.18%

RECOVERY RATE

TODAY	92.26%
YESTERDAY	91.85%

The first Covid-19 case in Karnataka was reported on March 8, 2020. Since then until June 13, 2021, a total of 27,65,134 cases have been reported in 1 year and 93 days...

1,69,12,183 Total doses administered in state

VACCINATION DRIVE STATUS

Number of people completing vaccination	30,09,307
Health care workers 1st dose	7,35,222
Health care workers 2nd dose	4,81,218
Frontline workers 1st dose	6,88,724
Frontline workers 2nd dose	2,25,272
Age 18-45 1st dose	29,76,519
Age 18-45 2nd dose	10,338
Above 45 1st dose	95,02,411
Above 45 2nd dose	22,92,479

DISTRICT-WISE COVID CASES

LAST 24 HOURS

1,348 BENGALURU URBAN

154 BENGALURU RURAL

Bagalkot: 62	Chamarajanagar: 129	Dakshina Kannada: 434	Hassan: 581	Kolar: 164	Raichur: 30	Udupi: 223
Ballari: 141	Chikkaballapur: 141	Davanagere: 391	Haveri: 64	Koppal: 76	Ramanagara: 47	Uttara Kannada: 250
Belagavi: 266	Chikkamagaluru: 223	Dharwad: 148	Kalaburagi: 24	Mandya: 467	Shivamogga: 393	Vijayapura: 96
Bidar: 7	Chitradurga: 128	Gadag: 73	Kodagu: 125	Mysuru: 1,251	Tumakuru: 352	Yadgir: 22

Hospitals ramp up paediatric care infra ahead of 3rd wave

From ICUs to training staff in handling kids, health centres gear up to fight the next battle

IFFATH FATHIMA @ Bengaluru

WITH health experts predicting that the possible third wave of Covid-19 could affect children predominantly, hospitals in the city are ramping up infrastructure like paediatric ICUs, high-dependency units (HDUs) and other facilities and are also training their staff.

Dr Chetan Ginigeri, lead consultant, Department of Paediatrics and Neonatology, Aster CMI Hospital, told *TNIE* that they are preparing well in advance to provide complete care to children of all age group, including newborns, during the third wave.

"We have set up six-levels of paediatric Covid-19 care that includes—paediatric ICUs for sick children, HDUs and other organ support units. We aim to cater to the needs of children who are recovering, waiting for completion of treatment and are in urgent need of a bed. Further, paediatric-specific equipment, consumables and other supplies are being added. Since we are witnessing a lot of Multi-system Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C) cases in the second wave, we believe more children will require ICU admissions post-Covid in the possible third wave," he added.

A health worker collects swab samples of a child in Mysuru on Sunday | UDAYSHANKAR S

> Since we are witnessing a lot of Multi-system Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C) cases in the second wave, we believe more children will require ICU admissions post-Covid in the third wave
>
> Dr Chetan Ginigeri, lead consultant, Aster CMI Hospital

Meanwhile, hospitals are also training their staff, including nurses, to tackle the third wave effectively and have formed a team of different departments. "We have set up a special Covid-19 team consisting of paediatricians, intensivists, pharmacists and nurses to assess the present situation in different sections of the hospital like ICUs, wards and pharmacy. Further, nurses are being given special training to handle children. We have also placed orders for paediatric drugs and supplies like masks, cannulas etc anticipating an increase in demand in the coming days," said Dr Merriyet MB, consultant paediatrician, Prakriya Hospitals, Tumakuru Road.

Similarly, Rainbow Children's Hospital, a 400-bed hospital with three branches in Bengaluru, is taking all steps to face the third wave.

"We are vaccinating as many parents as possible to reduce chances of Covid-19 transmission from parents to kids. We have created exclusive wards for Covid-positive children with advanced ventilators, monitoring equipment and all necessary medicines. Also, a dedicated counselling team has been formed to provide psychological support to parents of Covid-positive children," said Dr Pradeep Kumar, consultant neonatologist and paediatrician, Rainbow Children's Hospital, Hebbal.

Meanwhile, the committee set up the government to advice it on the third wave is expected to submit its report soon. "We are looking at a holistic approach rather than knee-jerk reactions," said Dr Srikanta J T, member, Covid-19 task force.

SYMPTOMS TO WATCH OUT FOR

- Any kind of bleeding in the teeth, gums
- Pus formation in between the teeth
- Numbness in the jaw or teeth
- Pain in lower lip region or anywhere on the face
- Discolouration of teeth
- One-sided facial swelling
- Headache
- Nasal or sinus congestion
- Fever

Shaky teeth post Covid could be sign of mucormycosis

CHETANA BELAGERE @ Bengaluru

SRINATH HM, a 52-year-old chartered accountant, experienced "shaky" tooth and severe pain in his jaw 18 days after recovering from Covid-19. Assuming it to be some teeth-related issue, he visited a dentist only to be told that it was the initial stage of mucormycosis (black fungus) and his tooth had to removed.

"Thankfully, we could save Srinath from his infection beginning in his tooth region and extending to other facial nerves, including his brain. It could have been fatal," said Dr Mohan N, senior dentist at a private hospital in Bengaluru.

Like Srinath, there have been many people reporting mobile or shaky teeth — referring to displacement of a tooth beyond its normal physiological boundaries — after recovering from Covid-19.

A study by Dr Girish Gowda, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon, Dentist, Dental Surgeon, at Astra Super Speciality Hospital, found that with an increase in mucormycosis cases came reports of people suffering from teeth-related issues — later diagnosed as black fungus.He says, a loose tooth can occur due to multiple reasons. However, if one experiences a loose tooth after recovering from Covid-19, it could indicate bone exposure which leaves room for fungal attack. Hence, it is a sign one must not ignore, he added.

Dr Kiran Kumar N, Professor and HoD, Government Dental College, Bengaluru, said that black fungus is an opportunistic infection that is seen mostly in immunocompromised post-Covid patients. While studies have shown that the new mutant variant may be behind this, he explains, "Loosening of teeth and jaw pain are oral signs ... but along with that, more importantly, sinus blockage, blackish discharge and discoloration over nasal bridge area should not be ignored," he added.

The fungus is known to affect mainly eyes, ears and oral cavity.

When asked about its effects on the mouth, Dr Girish said, "The symptoms range from bad breath to loose teeth. It is necessary that doctors advise patients, who have recovered from Covid-19, to go for regular oral check-ups for at least a month after recovery. An infection in mouth can increase the viral load of the disease."

"In order to maintain good oral hygiene, gargle with 2% povidine iodine solution. To keep sinuses clear, steam inhalation is recommended. Nasal irrigation with betadine will also help. Also, Covid-19 recovered patients should consume a high protein, low sugar diet, and take Vitamins A, E and B-Complex," Dr Kiran said.

'No specialists to treat black fungus in Belagavi dist'

SUNIL PATIL @ Belagavi

THOUGH there has been a dip in Covid-19 cases in Belagavi district, high fatality rate still remains a worry. Amid this, there is an increase in mucormycosis (black fungus) cases, posing a big challenge for the health authorities. However, the family members of those suffering from the fungal infection are complaining that the Belagavi Institute of Medical Science (BIMS) Hospital is neglecting the patients.

There are 197 active mucormycosis cases in the district, of them, over 100 are admitted at BIMS Hospital. "There is no sufficient medical equipment and specialist doctors at the hospito treat and perform surgeries. This has angered the kin of the patients. Centres to treat black fungus cases have been opened in many districts ... but necessary preparations have not been done in Belagavi district,"

The patients' kin slammed local politicians saying they were busy distributing ration kits and not putting pressure on the government to open a black fungus treatment centre in the district."Belagavi has two DyCMs, four ministers and 18 MLAs. What is the use of them if they cannot facilitate treatment of patients?" rued an attendant of a patient.

Sources said more than 60 patients of the 100 admitted require surgery. "But, there are only two doctors to conduct surgeries. There is only one set of equipment to conduct surgery. Thus, doctors have to conduct surgeries one after another. There is not enough stock of medicines," a source said.

District health surveillance officer Dr BN Tukkar said, "Two more specialist doctors will be joining on Monday to perform surgeries. The medical equipment required for the surgery will also be ready by next week. With this, 4-6 surgeries can be carried out by next week."

Malnutrition in kids a worry in Kalyana K'taka

RAMKRISHNA BADSESHI @ Kalaburagi

IN the wake of the possible Covid-19 third wave affecting children the most, there is an urgent need to focus on the four backward districts of the Kalyana-Karnataka region as Bidar, Kalaburagi, Yadgir and Raichur have more number of moderately underweight and severely underweight children compared to other districts.

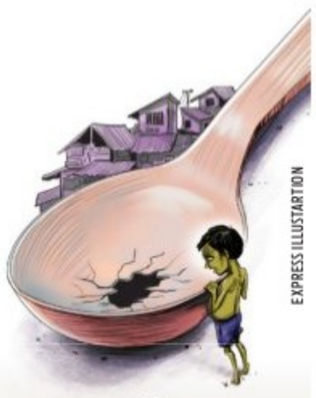
Of the total 4,36,516 moderately underweight children in Karnataka (as per a survey conducted by the Women and Child Welfare Department this year), the strength of moderately underweight children in these four districts is 1,20,048.

Raichur has the highest number of moderately underweight children (41,416, which is also the highest in Karnataka), followed by Bidar (28,868), Kalaburagi (28,154) and Yadgir (21,610). Again, Raichur has the highest number of severely underweight children (648), followed by Kalaburagi (632), Yadgir (359) and Bidar (53).

The total strength of children who have registered in anganwadi centres in the four districts is 7,20,705 (Kalaburagi-2,23,241, Raichur-2,21,553, Bidar-1,43,166 and Yadgir-1,32,745) and the total strength of normal children in these districts is 5,93,580

Kalaburagi district health officer Dr Sharanabasappa Ganajalkhed told *TNIE* that a meeting of paediatricians of the districts was held under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner V V Jyothsna. The heads of paediatrics departments of GIMS Hospital, ESIC Hospital, Basaveshwara Hospital and doctors of private hospitals also participated in it.

"They all have assured cooperation in case the third wave attacks children. Beds for children will be increased in three major hospitals of the city as well as doctors of private hospitals have been suggested to increase beds depending on the need. Five beds would be reserved for children in each taluk hospital," he said.



EXPRESS ILLUSTARTION

> Beds for children will be increased in three major hospitals of Kalaburagi. Five beds will be reserved for kids in each taluk hospital
>
> Dr Sharanabasappa Ganajalkhed, DHO

TO STOP VIRUS

CM: Mandatory Covid-19 tests for migrants arriving in B'luru

ENS @ Bengaluru

WITH the number of cases rising in Bengaluru after a sudden influx of people from other states and districts, Chief Minister **BS Yediyurappa** on Sunday said that Covid-19 tests will be mandatory for them.

Responding to journalists after returning to Bengaluru from a two-day tour to Hassan and Shivamogga, he said he would speak with officials about conducting tests mandatorily and effectively.

"I will speak with officials immediately and ensure that all those arriving in Bengaluru are tested," he said, when asked about the sudden influx of people putting Bengaluru at risk of a spike in infections, at a time when cases are reducing.

With the State government relaxing lockdown guidelines in Bengaluru, many are returning to work.

Amid Covid, jobs of 350 Ayush docs at stake

RAMACHANDRA V GUNARI @ Shivamogga

WITH the State Government announcing the appointment of 1,048 MBBS doctors in primary health centres (PHCs), services of 350 Ayush doctors—-who have been working in rural areas for the last 16 years — are at stake.

These doctors, who are graduates in Bachelor of Ayurvedic Medicine and Surgery (BAMS) and Bachelor of Homeopathic Medicine and Surgery (BHMS), were appointed on "against post" contract basis to work in rural areas. Of the 350 doctors, 58 have been working with the Health Department since 2006.

"When MBBS doctors were reluctant to serve in rural areas, the government posted BAMS and BHMS graduates, along with a few interested MBBS graduates, to serve in the hinterland. Many of them have crossed the age of 50. Now, with the government's new decision, they are on the verge of losing their job," Dr Rahul Devaraj from Shikaripura said.

Meanwhile, the Karnataka State Against MBBS AYUSH Doctors Association has urged the State Government to consider the services rendered by these Ayush doctors for the last 16 years and not terminate them.

"Our doctors have worked in difficult times like floods, droughts...in the last two years, they have worked in Covid care centres and hospitals. Taking all these into account, the government should retain them," Dr Devaraj said.

Also, several MBBS doctors have been working on contract basis for the last 8-10 years. Earlier, there was a provision to regularise their services. But it has not been done for several years now. So, the services of these doctors too are at stake.

"As soon as the newly-recruited doctors report, we will be relieved from our duties. Also, 90% of Covid-19 management in rural areas was handled by Ayush doctors. It is unfortunate that in the process of recruiting new doctors, our government is ready to replace us... who worked as frontline workers," added a doctor.

UNLOCK MODE

With the State Government easing lockdown restrictions in Bengaluru from Monday, people from across the country have started returning to the city. A scene at the Krantivira Sangolli Rayanna railway station on Sunday| SHRIRAM BN

LEFT IN THE LURCH

Pandemic, lockdown leave transgender community in dire straits

RANJANI MADHAVAN @ Bengaluru

WITH Karnataka in a state of lockdown to contain the spread of Covid-19, members of the transgender community are facing a plethora of issues -- from losing their sources of income to not being able to access vaccines. According to data from the Covid-19 state war room, 3,134 transgenders have tested positive for Covid-19 in Karnataka since the beginning of the pandemic last year.

Their livelihood has been severely hit due to the lockdowns, given that their two main sources of income are begging and sex work. Add to this, the social stigma and discrimination they face in society have created more problems for them.

"Just as people of other genders found it difficult to avail treatment in hospitals, the same situation played out among transgenders. Many of them live with HIV, blood pressure and diabetes. There has been no support from the government in terms of Covid-19 health care. We have had to rely on the generosity of some doctors," said Mallu Kumbar, state coordinator, Karnataka Sexual Minorities Forum.

Akkai Padmashali, transgender activist from NGO Ondede, said the figure of 3,134 is grossly under-reported as there are close to 8,000-10,000 transgenders in Bengaluru alone. According to Akkai, many have even succumbed to Covid-19.

"The system in the city does not address the issue of transgenders. Even in the second wave, Karnataka was caught unprepared and we had trouble accessing beds, oxygen and vaccines. When we contact doctors and officials, they seem to be ignorant. We need a statewide campaign from the government's side to vaccinate transgenders, sex workers, LGBTQIA community members, differently-abled, street vendors, etc. To begin with, we need a survey to identify the number of transgenders in Karnataka," Akkai said.

Nakshatra R Gola, founder of Nammane Summane orphanage and a transgender, said they have no support from family and society to take of those who contract Covid-19.

"Transgenders are like daily wage labourers and cannot afford private hospital care. When in home isolation, they have problems accessing groceries and medicines and availing treatment," Nakshatra said.

They also feel neglected as they were not included in the Rs 1,250-crore relief package announced by Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa. Kumbar said the community needs direct transfer of Rs 10,000 to survive the ongoing lockdown and pandemic, and that they also require a complete ration kit and not just rice and dal.

Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao distributed 32 brand new cars to all additional collectors after the conclusion of his review on rural and urban development with them and district panchayat officers at Pragathi Bhavan in Hyderabad on Sunday

MINORITY SCHOLARSHIPS

CPM state committee member M V Jayarajan

Jayarajan: Kerala HC didn't consider social realities

Says it should have done thorough study on conditions leading to sanctioning of scholarships

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Kozhikode

CPM state committee member and Kannur district secretary M V Jayarajan has come out strongly against the High Court verdict on the minority scholarship saying that the court did not consider the social realities of the state while pronouncing the order. Addressing an online seminar titled 'Minority welfare scheme: Court verdict and the facts' organised by the Kerala Muslim Jama'at, he said, unfortunately, the court order will not help in solving the backwardness in all communities.

"The court should have examined the social conditions in the state correctly. It should have conducted a thorough study on the circumstances that led to sanctioning of the scholarships according to the Paloli committee recommendations in 2008," he said.

The CPM leader added that if there was an issue of time for presenting the different views in the court due to Covid-19, the court could have entrusted someone with studying the issue in detail.

Jayarajan said the contention that everyone is equal before the law is true. It is not wrong to say that Christian community should also get scholarships like Muslims because the former too is a minority community. That is why the LDF government set up the J B Koshy committee to study the backwardness of the Christian community. The government will think about the measures to be taken to address the Christian community's backwardness on the basis of the committee's recommendations, he said.

It is for the first time a CPM leader is coming out in the open against the High Court order. Minister M V Govindan had earlier stated that the government is duty bound to implement the court order. In a Facebook post, politburo member M A Baby said the government will find an amicable settlement to the issue following the court order.

EXPRESS READ

21 copper plate inscriptions found in Srisailam

Kurnool: Copper plate inscriptions dating back to the 14th or 16th century were found near Ghanta Matham of Sri Bhramaramba Mallikarjuna Swamy temple in Srisailam on Sunday. Initially, workers found 18 inscriptions while digging the ground as part of the renovation works. Three more inscriptions were unearthed later. All the inscriptions were handed over to the Srisailam temple management. The inscriptions are in Sanskrit and Telugu. A total of 35 inscriptions have been found during the renovation works till now.

After jumbos, now leopards found poisoned near Mysuru

K SHIVA KUMAR @MYSURU

THE recent poisoning of six leopards in a gap of 20 days near Nanjangud and HD Kote have made environment activists put pressure on forest officials to catch the culprits immediately to send out a strong message.

This is not the first time that man-animal conflicts have led to death of wildlife. In 2009, four elephants were found dead at Ullahalli Left Bank canal near Kapasoge. A chemical analysis of cyanide was used to kill the pachyderms. The Karnataka High Court ordered the forest department to constitute a committee by the forest department to conduct a study. But more than 10 years later, the culprits are yet to be caught and punished.

In the leopard deaths, a half-eaten carcass of a stray dog, laced with poison, was found near the dead leopards, which prima facie indicated that people living nearby were responsible for the killing of big cats. Forest officials have sent carcasses of the leopards to the Institute of Animal Health and Veterinary Biologicals in Bengaluru as there is no dedicated wildlife forensic lab near wildlife habitats here.

Experts said that such incidents are recurring as there was no action was taken against those responsible for elephant deaths.

Carcass of a leopard and its cubs killed in a suspected case of poisoning in Belavadi on the outskirts of Mysuru

Dr Nagaraj, a veterinarian, who has worked with wildlife capturing elephants and tigers for the last two decades, felt that it is difficult to blame farmers or landlords for such wildlife deaths as leopards might have caught the poisoned dog somewhere else and brought it to the field. There have also been cases of miscreants poisoning wildlife to put owners of farm lands in trouble, he added.

Villagers alleged that it is difficult for them to graze their cattle, sheep and goats as there is a threat of big cats. Also, the compensation paid for the death of cattle never reaches them. Govinda Nayaka of Madanahalli said that when he was grazing his herd near Kabini Right Canal, a leopard attacked his three sheep. When he raised the alarm, it left the kill and disappeared.

"We have lost our crop because of wild boar menace. Peacocks, whose population is increasing, have destroyed our flower plants and vegetable crops," said Prabhudev of Gollur. Experts said that more leopards are straying into human habitations as there is no traffic on roads because of the Covid-triggered lockdown.

Dr Prayag HS, a veterinarian, an assistant professor and chief veterinary officer at Veterinary College, Hebbal, Bengaluru said, "Leopards are often sighted after dark and they try to find spots in sugarcane fields. But their presence scares people and that is why you see incidents of poisoning of leopards."

Prayag, who has done research on human-leopard conflict and mitigation in agri-pastoral landscape, said that peaceful coexistence and better scientific understanding of animal behaviour is a must along with awareness and education of stakeholders.

DCF KC Prashanth said that they are waiting for the report to confirm the cause of leopard deaths. He said, "We have rounded up five suspects and started interrogating them. They have some leads that will help us solve the case."

IN THE NAME OF TRADITION

Girl flees home after parents' Devadasi threat

RAMKRISHNA BADSESHI
@ Kalaburagi

THE State Government though claims to have eradicated the Devadasi practice, it continues to cast a long shadow even now. In a stark reminder, a 20-year-old girl recently ran away from home after her parents allegedly threatened to offer her to a temple as a 'Devadasi' if she refused to marry her sister's husband.

The girl, Yallamma (name changed), fled her home in Chinchodi village of Devadurga taluk in Raichur district a few days ago and took shelter at her relative's house at Surpur town in Yadgir district. When the parents learnt her whereabouts, they allegedly threatened the relatives too, said Lalsab, Child Development Officer of Surpur taluk.

The Women and Children Welfare Office rescued the girl after being alerted by an advocate and she was handed over to a women rehabilitation centre run by the Adijambava Education Society in Devadurga.

Later, Yallamma filed a complaint with the Jalahalli police, saying that her mother, a rehabilitated Devadasi, threatened to force her into the practice if she refuses to marry her sister's husband.

The police told *The New Indian Express* that the parents filed a counter-complaint against the girl, claiming that she wanted to marry a person of her choice and was planning to take money from the house.

They requested the police to hand over the girl to them. As the girl refused to return to her house and sought protection, she was shifted to the Mahila Santwana Kendra in Raichur. Raichur Deputy Commissioner R Venkateshkumar said he will order an inquiry by senior police officers.

"The girl will undergo counselling and, if necessary, financial assistance will be given to her for self-employment. If she desires, her marriage will also be solemnised with the person of her choice," he said.

> **The girl will undergo counselling, and, if necessary, financial assistance will be given to her for self-employment. If she desires, her marriage will also be solemnised with the person she chooses**
>
> R Venkateshkumar, Raichur Deputy Commissioner

SILVER LINING FOR CITY

A cloudburst in Chennai provided the city a much-needed respite from scorching heat. Dark clouds hover over Pallavaram on Sunday | ASHWIN PRASATH

Man held for attacking doc

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

PUTTENAHALLI police on Saturday arrested a 29-year-old man for allegedly assaulting a duty doctor in the ICU of a private hospital on Bannerghatta Road.

Police said the accused, Jagadish Dhanapal, was arrested, and his mother Jayanthi was also booked in the FIR as Accused No. 2, following a complaint by Praveen Wali, an administrative staffer. Both the suspects are residents of Devarachikkanahalli.

During questioning, Jagadish told police that his father Dhanapal was treated for Covid-19, and had later tested negative. However, his condition worsened due to pneumonia, and the doctor treating him informed that he was brain dead, and suggested that his body could be donated.

This upset Jagadish, who began arguing with the doctor, asking how a patient's body and organs could be donated when he is still alive. Furious about Dr Padmakumar and nurse Mala's behaviour, he allegedly physically attacked them. Jagadish was later released on station bail.

Meanwhile, Wali declined to speak about the incident when contacted by *The New Indian Express*.

CRIME PATROL

Woman found dead, husband absconding

Bengaluru: A 45-year-old woman was allegedly murdered by her husband in Hennur police station limits on Saturday night. The deceased, Danamma, is a construction worker who hailed from Tamil Nadu. Police said the workers were living in temporary sheds at an under-construction building in Prakruti Layout. Danamma was living with her husband Velu and son. "Her son had gone to his friend's house in the night and the murder came to light when he returned on Sunday morning. It is learnt that there were frequent fights between the couple and they had quarreled even on Saturday night. It is suspected that Velu, who is absconding, murdered his wife by strangulating her," the Hennur police, who are on the lookout for the accused, added.

Stop bids for hydrocarbon extraction in Cauvery basin: Stalin writes to Modi

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Chennai

A few days after the Union Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas invited bids for oil and gas fields in Vadatheru block in Pudukottai district, Chief Minister MK Stalin on Sunday wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi urging him to drop the proposal. In another bid to protect federalism, Stalin also requested the Prime Minister to direct the Union government officials to consult the State government before bringing any area in the State for auctions in future for hydrocarbon exploration and extraction.

The area identified for auction falls in the Cauvery basin and also in the Protected Agricultural Zone declared by the State government, under the Tamil Nadu Protected Agricultural Zone Development Act, 2020.

This legislation prohibits any new exploration, drilling, and extraction of oil and natural gas and other similar hydrocarbons from the Protected Agriculture Zone, said Stalin in his letter to the Prime Minister.

Given the pivotal role played by the region in the agrarian economy, Stalin said the Cauvery basin is the bedrock of the State's food security. He added that this ecologically-fragile zone supports the livelihood of millions of farmers and farm workers.

Noting that projects to extract hydrocarbons from the Cauvery basin have faced unanimous opposition from all stakeholders, Stalin said the State government has consistently opposed hydrocarbon exploration, and extraction projects in the Cauvery basin and neighbouring district.

"It is unfortunate that the sentiments of the people, the probable ecological impact and the legal enactments by the government of Tamil Nadu have not been taken into account by the relevant authorities," Stalin pointed out. He said the invitation of bids for extracting hydrocarbon has ignited public agitation in Pudukkottai and neighbouring districts.

> **My government is of the firm view that no new hydrocarbon projects should be taken up in the Cauvery basin and neighbouring districts in the interest of protecting the livelihoods of the farmers**
>
> MK Stalin, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister

NIRBHAYA FUND

Women's safety upped, 340 CCTVs installed across SWR stations

S LALITHA @Bengaluru

IN a major boost to safety of women passengers, the South Western Railway Zone has put in place 340 CCTVs across railway stations. The upgraded security apparatus has been commissioned at a cost of Rs 8.17 crore under the Nirbhaya Fund.

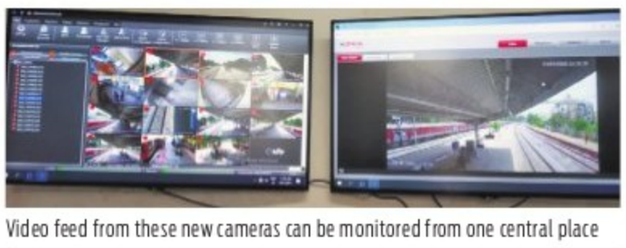
This Internet-based Video Surveillance System (IVSS) envisages using CCTV cameras which are connected by optical fibre cables.

Aneesh Hegde, Chief Public Relations Officer, SWR, said Shivamogga, Hassan, Davanagere, Bangarpet, Kengeri, Bangalore Cantonment, Sathya Sai Prashanti Nilayan, Hubballi, Vasco da Gama, Hosapete, Belagavi and Ballari railway stations have installed the facility in February 2021. "An Integrated Security Command and Control Centre was set up simultaneously," he said. The process of installing them in Gadag, Bijapur and Mysuru stations are under way, Hegde added.

"The advantage this system offers is that of remote monitoring of all locations covered by it. The video feed from these new cameras can be monitored from one central place, the divisional or zonal control office. In the earlier CCTV system, the feed was localised to the particular station where the camera was installed," Hegde said.

The Railway Protection Force would be responsible for monitoring them inside the station and the Government Railway Police would do it outside the station limits, the CPRO said.

Alok Kumar, Inspector General and Principal chief Security Commissioner, RPF, SWR, told *TNIE*, "The IVSS system of surveillance has been adopted in all major stations/junctions of SWR keeping in sync with technological development. This will be helpful in keeping a watch on known criminals, habitual offenders if and when they move to railway stations." Railway public sector unit RailTel in a statement said that the IVSS system can store footage for upto 30 days.



Video feed from these new cameras can be monitored from one central place

TTD lays stone for temple in Jammu village

ENS @ TIRUPATI

FOUNDATION stone was laid for the construction of Sri Venkateswara Swamy temple by the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) in Majhin village of Jammu on Sunday.

The temple will be built on 62.06 acre land in Majhin village in Jammu and is scheduled to be completed in two phases with a cost of ₹33.22 crore. The temple will be managed by the TTD.

The government of Jammu on April 1 approved the proposal to allot land to the TTD for building the temple and allied infrastructure on lease for 40 years. With the allotment of land, the TTD has commenced the construction of the Srivari temple for which the pooja was performed on Sunday as per tradition.

Starting with Ganapathi Puja, pundits performed Viswaksena Puja, Punyahavachanam, Agnipratistha and Vastu Homam at the site.

The sacred 'kalasams' were brought to Yagashala by TTD Chairman YV Subba Reddy and Executive Officer Dr KS Jawahar Reddy and they performed Abhishekam to the stone kept in the construction area.

This was followed by Silanyasa Puja, Chaturveda Parayanam, Navagraha Stotra Parayanam, Maha Vishnu Puja and then the stone was consecrated in the ground and special puja was performed. Later Jammu Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha was explained about the plan of the upcoming temple and other amenities.

WOWING PMO

Mysuru sculptor's statue earns place in Kedarnath

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Mysuru

A new feather has been added to the cap of a Mysuru-based sculptor Arun Yogiraj after one of his sculptures — a 12-foot tall statue of **Adi Shankaracharya** (in picture) — is slated to be installed at the Shankaracharya Samadhi at Kedarnath in Uttarakhand.

Arun, a well-known name in the field of sculpture is a fifth-generation sculptor from the city of palaces, has the credit of sculpting statues of Jayachamarajendra Wadiyar, Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, and many others which have become landmark circles in the city.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who showed interest in the restoration project in Kedarnath, decided to install a statue of Adi Shankaracharya. Many sculptors across the country were invited.

Arun, who had made a two-feet tall stone idol as a model, impressed the PMO, following which he was roped in for the job. The project began last year and Arun, along with his team of nine assistants, worked over the statue for the last several months.

The statue is sculpted using the Krishna Shile — black stone — which the sculptor claims can withstand vagaries of nature. He and his team are busy giving final touches to the statue and are planning to transport it by in the next four days.

EDITORIAL

Nothing endures but change, and accepting this has the potential to transform the dread of dying into joyful living

Mingyur Rinpoche

INDIAN EXPRESS IS NOT AN INDUSTRY. IT IS A MISSION.

— Ramnath Goenka

UP'S PATHETIC VAX RATE NEEDS TO BE TURBOCHARGED

When the arguably third-most powerful leader in the BJP walks in rather glumly for in-person meetings following summons from the top, it cannot but mean serious business. While the cumulative official toll of the pandemic in Uttar Pradesh is close to 17,000, the unofficial count of the undocumented—bodies dumped into the Ganga and the shallow mass graves spotted along the river's banks across the state—told a different horrific story of under-reporting and gross mismanagement. With the state polls due in about eight months, data doctoring was not entirely surprising. Though public memory is short, word-of-mouth information on the colossal loss of lives can be expected to linger since Covid is here to stay for at least a few years. If people's perception changes, even the appointment of an election commissioner from UP can do little to alter the poll outcome. So, Narendra Modi summoned CM Yogi Adityanath to discuss course corrections.

UP cannot be won without changing the pandemic narrative, which is why the Centre appears to have set an ambitious target of vaccinating all the eligible population by December-end. But the state has an Everest to climb. For, as of June 11, its percentage of population with at least one dose of a vaccine was a paltry 12.7, the lowest in the country. Himachal Pradesh (38.8%) and Kerala (33.2%) were on top of that ladder, with the country's average standing at 21.2%. Within UP, its urban areas have a decent one-dose coverage. Noida is doing remarkably well, having vaccinated around 60%. In contrast, interim Congress president Sonia Gandhi's constituency Rae Bareli is inexplicably among the biggest laggards in India, with just around 7% taking a shot. Add to that vaccine hesitancy and the fact that 15% fewer women are taking the jab across India as compared to men, and the task of inoculating UP fully by this year-end is of Himalayan proportions.

The BJP's Mission UP has already begun with the induction of Congress leader Jitin Prasada. A state Cabinet revamp is on the cards. The other big task of course is to restart the economy to address growing poverty, job losses and rural economic distress. The sooner it is done, the better.

ENSURING INCLUSIVE GROWTH IN TN

Tamil Nadu's State Development Policy Council (SDPC) has its task cut out. The announcement appointing eminent economist J Jeyaranjan as its vice-chairperson came on the heels of the news that India had slipped two ranks in the Sustainable Development Goals index. The country now stands at rank 117 among a total of 193 UN member states because it failed to make substantial progress in ending poverty and hunger. Tamil Nadu has been a frontrunner in industrial, social and sustainable development. Yet, there are several gaps that must be filled, and the SDPC could be the solution that the state needs.

For instance, the Twelfth Plan identified 10 themes for TN, of which an important one was inclusive growth. Yet, the social and political consciousness of the theme has not influenced the scientific and infrastructural development of the state in a broader sense. Infrastructural inequality continues to plague cities, towns and villages alike. Suburbs around Chennai—especially to the North and West, where blue-collar workers live—continue to struggle without piped sewage lines. When water scarcity hits Chennai, it's the low-income settlements that are most affected. In the northern districts, just hours away from the capital, Dalits continue to struggle for proper burial spaces or access to these areas through streets populated by dominant castes. Despite years of deliberation over social justice, the state has not been able to bridge this basic inequity efficiently. In short, our planners have failed to build cities and towns that foster collaboration.

The Council will have to consider this challenge while working on inclusive growth. Building schools and colleges that replace discrimination with collaboration, healthcare facilities that provide equitable services immaterial of caste and class, and cities sans caste colonies or communal ghettoes will require a technology-oriented approach. It would require a reimagining of engineering and science policies from a sociological perspective. If the Council is able to even lay the foundations for this in the next five years, the vision of inclusive growth can be realised in the distant future.

Beijing is aware that New Delhi is continental in security approach while the actual Indian advantage lies in the maritime domain

THE GEOPOLITICAL CASCADE DUE TO LADAKH STANDOFF

LT GEN SYED ATA HASNAIN (RETD)

Former Commander, Srinagar-based 15 Corps. Now Chancellor, Central University of Kashmir

SOUMYADIP SINHA

Following up on my article a fortnight ago that reviewed the military situation in Ladakh, there is a need to analyse the geopolitical issues that brought about the standoff that began last year and those that spun off from it. The standoff continues today, albeit with partial disengagement but very little de-escalation. Ladakh may be proximate to the roof of the world but turbulence there has geopolitical impact far into the oceans and lands more than halfway across the world. Its presence right there in the mountain ranges almost contiguous to Tibet and Xinjiang (China's soft underbelly) and providing the most optimal overland connectivity to the Indian Ocean (far more stable than what Gilgit-Baltistan does) gives it this strategic importance. China perceives that India's northern mountain tracts are isolated; within it Ladakh is even more so. It views this as the ideal pressure point for coercion. However, the northern mountains have an intrinsic connect with the Indian Ocean. India may be threatened up north but it can make China extremely uncomfortable down south in the waters through which flow the latter's energy shipping lanes as also the container traffic taking finished manufactured goods to various markets—the lifeline of China's grandstanding economic status. Beijing is aware that New Delhi is continental in security approach while the actual Indian advantage lies in the maritime domain. It is not easy to alter mindsets as India's confidence in its maritime strength and quid pro quo capability in the oceans at a fundamentally different level of engagement are understandably low. It is not the Indian Navy that lacks confidence but the nation's strategic community as a whole. It is this mindset that needs to be overcome as the world moves into geopolitical reset and the centre of gravity of US strategic concerns shifts to the Indo-Pacific.

In the ongoing transition of the reset involving shift of focus from the Middle East to the Indo-Pacific, nations such as Japan, Taiwan, South Korea and Australia already have various shades of security treaties with the US for mutual advantage. India is only a major defence partner of the US. Even while being incorporated into the Indo-Pacific security matrix, India retains its strategic autonomy but remains at risk while it seeks, negotiates and processes its entry into what could emerge as the NATO of the East, the Quad. This hypothesis points to the fact that as long as the Middle East and Afghanistan remained in focus, China did not perceive a threat from India. In recent years, it has observed the speed with which Indo-US relations have progressed well beyond the socio-economic domain into the strategic one. As long as India remained in self-doubt about moving into a strategic relationship with the US and harped on its multilateral approach to international relationships, including strong ties with Moscow and Beijing, the Chinese were quite satisfied. China's worst fears were an Indo-US-Japan equation translating into a security understanding, especially one that focused on the maritime domain. The Quad earlier hadn't shown much progress and China was hopeful that the Australia connection would not materialise. Doklam 2017 was a case of ambiguity for China; it was not sure how to handle its strategic fallout but it sensed India's progressively growing self-confidence.

In choosing to message the world about its larger intent of fast-tracking its superpower status, China was pragmatic. It chose to adopt 'wolf warrior diplomacy' against the Pacific nations but limited military coercion against India. That is because military coercion against these nations would bring it into direct conflict with the US while pressuring India would draw the US only indirectly. China finds India isolated at the high Himalayas and in collusion with Pakistan, it finds that the risk of a larger conflagration is comparatively minimal as no other power is likely to get involved as a balancing force. The Quad and potential Quad nations all have maritime interests far from India's conflict in the Himalayas.

> India's confidence in its maritime strength and quid pro quo capability in the oceans at a fundamentally different level of engagement are low. But it is this mindset that needs to be overcome as the world moves into geopolitical reset

Without yet perceiving the pandemic as a strategic malafide intent of China, its series of actions in East and Southeast Asia, and against Australia, in 2020 showed a pattern of 'wolf warrior diplomacy'—the latter being defined as the use of confrontational rhetoric as well as increased willingness to rebuff criticism of China and court controversy in interviews and on social media and in the diplomatic realm. It was unnerving for some nations including Taiwan and was a form of limited military brinkmanship with diplomatic coercion. China knew it could not press home anything militarily in view of the various arrangements for security that exist all over the region. Xi Jinping has now spoken against wolf warrior diplomacy and urged that a more positive strategic perception of China be created. That is probably the new strategy in the Pacific region; it is left to be seen what is going to be China's strategy related to the Indo part of the Indo-Pacific.

India joining the Indo-Pacific matrix of security would mean far greater maritime cooperation and thus an impingement on China's Achilles' heel. Dissuading India from joining this by keeping the sword of Damocles hanging in the form of a progressive escalatory response at the northern borders in conjunction with Pakistan would remain the basic concept of China's strategy to prevent itself from being hemmed in from different directions in the maritime domain. It will also work on the maritime neighbourhood of India; Sri Lanka, Maldives, Bangladesh and Myanmar all assume greater importance than just a string of pearls. For India, ramping up maritime offensive and defensive capabilities appears to be the best bet if it wishes to be an effective contributory partner in the Quad. However, it should also be prepared for bouts of coercion at the continental borders, the nature of which may remain unpredictable. The danger that will inevitably remain will be the conversion of China's politico-strategic intent into military aims. I concluded in my last piece that China went wrong in this in April 2020. The chance of getting this wrong again remains very high. Therein lies India's challenge—to remain an important and contributing member of the Quad or any other such arrangement and yet deter China from undertaking any misconceived military adventurism at the border. Perhaps at some stage this could come to a head, and that is the situation we have to be prepared for, because militarily we will be alone against a collusive effort.

(atahasnain@gmail.com)

DIGNITY TO THE DEPARTED AMID COVID

JAYESH RANJAN

IAS officer in Telangana

AMULYA ANIL

Law student at Symbiosis Law School, Hyderabad

Burning pyres, hastily put together makeshift cremation grounds and unidentified mortal remains floating in rivers have left citizens in anguish and also stirred debates on the administrative capability of the states. The inhumane disposal of the Covid-19 affected cadavers raises questions on the absence of sensitivity that the state machinery ought to be otherwise manifesting. This has led the judiciary to comment that the Covid-afflicted are not being treated with dignity, even in their death. Post-mortality management in the Covid-19 era is a spectrum that needs to acknowledge the rights of the deceased for a dignified final journey, ensure the emotional and physical well-being of people involved in the funeral process, consider the customary sentiments of the bereaved, adopt bio-medical waste management models and simultaneously operate within the perimeters of the laws in force. Though numerous guidelines and advisories have been issued by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare much earlier, we still have few examples to talk of due to the absence of long-term implementational tactics. A week after the National Human Rights Commission notified its advisory on 'Upholding the Rights and the Dignity of the Dead', an incident of a garbage truck carrying the corpse of a young adult in Madhya Pradesh has amplified the need for the state and the local administration to establish a sustainable and credible system of body disposal. The incapability of managing post-death situations effectively and sensitively not only impacts the bereaved negatively but also carries the potential to cause social unrest.

The impact upon the bereaved and the citizens is in multiple ways and in varying degrees. Financial challenges, emotional rollercoasters, confusion arising due to not being aware of relevant procedures, not being able to complete the rituals due to lockdown rules and hospital managements unable or unwilling to cooperate are just a few. Funeral processes demand sufficient crematoriums, accessibility and affordability of wood or furnaces, ambulances or hearse vans for conveyance of cadavers, and a reliable point of contact to guide them through the legal obligations. These issues are further complicated with the ambiguity in the need for various documents and the process for their validation. The fears and dilemmas of an individual, lack of identity proof documents and the absence of kith and kin have left many cadavers unclaimed, which is an added shocker for the administration.

While these lapses have dominated the public narrative in the initial months of the second wave, we see some evidences of governments putting their act together. The success of any administrative strategy is dependent on the interplay between bureaucratic reliability, political support, intra-society coordination and the cooperative efforts of citizens. Bengaluru's centralised and distinct Covid-19 cadaver disposal system, which involves both civilian volunteers and statutory authorities, deserves praise. Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike established the BBMP Crematorium Helpline, a single official government window that functions round the clock to assist citizens with the post-mortality procedures in its jurisdiction. The Helpline books slots in crematoriums, offers ambulance services, assists the bereaved with the documentation processes and renders every other relevant service without any cost. It has also adopted a complaint redressal mechanism that makes the system reliably accountable. In Hyderabad too, the State Forest Development Corporation has stepped up to provide free supply of wood to the crematoriums. The Hyderabad Municipal Corporation has launched the Antim Yatra Rathamulu service that offers free conveyance of cadavers across the city. The services can be availed by reaching out to the GHMC's Covid-19 Control Room. The Greater Chennai Corporation too adopted the Bengaluru model and launched a helpline number to assist with issues pertaining to cremations and burials.

> Post-mortality management in the Covid-19 era is a spectrum that needs to acknowledge the rights of the deceased for a dignified final journey, ensure the emotional and physical well-being of people involved in the funeral process and consider the sentiments of the bereaved, among others

It is, therefore, time for states and local administrations to prudently examine the mechanisms adopted by other successful jurisdictions and implement the proven features in their own machinery. However, any administrative policy would perform better only if it enjoys public cooperation. In Basapura, a village in Karnataka, an ambulance carrying a corpse of a Covid-19 deceased was stopped, due to the fear of transmission of the infection from the cadaver. In other parts of the country, there are instances of financial extortion by mortuary staff, crematorium workers and hearse van drivers. The local administrations need to work on their grievance redressal mechanisms by not only imposing liabilities but also by understanding the factors that led to such acts. The states' job goes beyond putting an end-to-end efficient system in place; they should also reach out to the people through campaigns focused on dignity, humanity and empathy. There have been many heartwarming instances of complete strangers taking over the last rites, sometimes cutting across caste, community and religion divides.

Indian case studies get cited during all kinds of discussions and debates related to Covid-19. Here is a chance to be a shining light in an otherwise depressing record.

(jayesh_ranjan@hotmail.com, amulyaaniofficial@gmail.com)

MAILBAG

WRITE TO: letters@newindianexpress.com

Loans written off

The news report *Banks write off ₹1.53 lakh crore to make books look good* (June 13) has come as a shock. The poor depositors park their hard-earned money in banks. But the rich and influential who avail loans from PSU banks fail to repay them and then try to use their proximity to the government. Due to this reason, almost all such banks are in the red.

S Ravindranath, Bengaluru

Voice of underprivileged

The death of Prof Siddalingaiah, the great Dalit activist, poet and writer from Karnataka, to Covid-related ailments is disheartening. A humble man who became the voice of the underprivileged and spoke against social injustices, he was easily approachable even after he became an MLC. As chairman of KDA, Siddalingaiah stressed the use of the Kannada language in all government offices and the IT sector. His readers will definitely seek solace in his autobiography *Ooru Keri*, which will be a guiding light for future generations.

Chitra Manjunath, Bengaluru

Clash of titans

As expected, the clash of the titans Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic did not disappoint their avid fans around the world. We witnessed an intense and incredible level of tennis in the epic semifinal match of French Open 2021. Tennis players are undoubtedly some of the best athletes in the world and when they put their heart and soul into a match that lasts more than four hours, it is a real tribute to the wonderful game.

M Raj Kumar, Puducherry

Probe Covid's origin

The entire world has suffered a lot after the outbreak of Covid-19 from Wuhan in China. There is a need to find out Covid's origin not only to prevent such catastrophes in the future but also to ensure that no country can go scot-free. If China is not fully cooperating with the investigating agencies, it obviously has more to conceal than reveal.

K V Seetharamaiah, Hassan

No future for him in Cong

This is with reference to the opinion article *Going to Mandir? Bring some Prasad* (June 13). Jitin Prasada's move to join the BJP is beneficial to him as well as the saffron party. There is no scope for him in the Congress that is ruled by a fading dynasty. The BJP too needs him as its Brahmin face to compensate for the reported disenchantment of the voters with the Yogi regime.

Dharmarajan A K, Thalassery

Protests & non-violence

This with reference to the standalone photo captioned *A ride to the future?* (June 12). It shows a car mounted on a horse cart. Imagine the hardship faced by the animal that had to pull the cart on which many humans were standing in addition to the car. Protests must not be carried out by hurting others.

Amal Thomas, Pala

Rich painting tradition

This is with reference to *The only surviving Vijayanagara paintings in Hampi* (June 10). The article is a good piece of writing on the rich mural painting tradition in the southern part of India. The author has recounted the depictions in the murals and their interesting features, along with a brief history of some rulers and scholars.

C Ghanshyam, Visakhapatnam

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

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TWEETS OF THE DAY

Sitaram Yechury @SitaramYechury
Modi's policies create an obnoxious divide: Shining India for a minuscule minority Suffering India for vast majority Unacceptable

Shashi Tharoor @ShashiTharoor
Fascinating debate, but i don't believe India's a failed state, just a badly-governed one under BJP Raj

Prakash Javadekar @PrakashJavdekar
From bridges to waterways, from promotion of organic agriculture to creating logistics hubs, last 7 years have seen immense development in N-E

Interest rate cut on saving plans had FM, EC nod: RTI

Dept of Economic Affairs sought clearance from poll commission as Model Code of Conduct was in force due to state and UT elections

KUMAR VIKRAM @ New Delhi

THE interest rate cut on small saving schemes announced on March 31 and which was withdrawn hours later by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman as an "oversight" had the go-ahead of both the ministry as well as the Election Commission (EC), an RTI application filed by this newspaper revealed.

The RTI reply disclosed the swift movement of letters between the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) and the EC. The DEA had to seek clearance from the EC as the Model Code of Conduct was imposed due to Assembly polls. Details of communications between the DEA and the EC received through RTI revealed that the DEA had written to the EC on March 31 seeking its approval on the rate cut. The letter, which was in the "most immediate" category, was sent to the EC with the subject "revision of interest rates for small saving schemes".

"For the first quarter of FY 2021-22 starting from April 1 and ending on June 30, the rates have been revised with the approval of Hon'ble FM, as per the confidential draft enclosed," said the DEA letter. The letter also said the elections have been announced and the MCC have been imposed, and in that case, the EC's approval will be required for all policy decisions. It concluded with a line in bold letters saying, "The matter may be treated as urgent as the revision has to be affected from 1.04.2021." Considering the issue as urgent, the EC responded the same day with a go-ahead.

"There is a structure inside the commission to respond within 24 hours. The panel has to give reply to urgent important matters — either deny or accept or clarify," former chief election commissioner O P Rawat said. He added that there is a provision in the MCC to not stop any policy-related issues at the national level in case of assembly polls. "There was no need to seek permission in that particular case (saving interest rate revision), he said.

Rawat said earlier, a lot of such issues used to flood the panel during polls for seeking permissions. However, in 2017, it was decided to form a committee headed by the chief secretary of states.

The EC letter addressed to the secretary, Ministry of Finance, (DEA) read: "The Election Commission has no objection, from the MCC angle to the revision of interest rate for small saving schemes and issue of its notification subject to the conditions that no undue publicity should be given and no political mileage may be derived out of it."

While the ministry had cut the interest rate of small saving schemes on March 31 and uploaded the order on the website in the late evening, Sitharaman tweeted about the withdrawal of the revision on April 1 at 7.54 am.

Small saving schemes include Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana, Public Provident Fund, Kisan Vikas Patra and others.

Officials said as four states and one UT were amid Assembly polls, the timing of the rate cut was probably seen as a counter-productive band the order was withdrawn.

Sitharaman had withdrawn the order saying it was issued by oversight | EXPRESS

Finance minister took to Twitter to clarify

While Finance Ministry had cut interest rate of small saving schemes on March 31 and uploaded the order on the website, Sitharaman tweeted about the withdrawal of the revision on April 1. "Interest rates of small savings schemes of GoI shall continue to be at the rates which existed in the last quarter of 2020-2021, ie, rates that prevailed as of March 2021. Orders issued by oversight shall be withdrawn," she said

LOAN

Mounting debts leave trafficking survivors staring at bleak future

RITWIKA MITRA @ New Delhi

THE interest rate for the loan amount of ₹70,000 that Trisha, 27, had borrowed during the first wave of the pandemic is mounting. Every 15 days, she has to give the moneylender an amount of ₹1,750.

A survivor of trafficking, Trisha has fought many battles — of stigma, lack of family and societal support, and a struggle with finding livelihood opportunities. While she always managed to find hope around the corner amid her struggles, the resident of Canning, West Bengal, is finding it hard to afford rations for her husband and two children now. "I am worried about the increasing amount of debt at a time when I am unable to afford rations for my family. I have weathered many storms. But this time, I don't see a solution," she said.

A survey among 53 survivors of trafficking by Bengal-based NGO Goranbose Gram Bikash Kendra (GGBK) showed that 40% of them had taken a loan from various landowners, shopkeepers, mortgaged their ornaments and had taken additional loans to run their family for livelihood and treatment. A further break up showed that while 36% had taken loans by mortgaging their ornaments, 18% had taken loan from bandhan and self-help groups, 50% had taken loans from moneylenders and neighbours, 14% were purchasing daily essentials by taking loans from shopkeepers, and 9% had borrowed money from their relatives.

The survey found that survivors also have additional burden of having to frequent police stations as they receive threats from the traffickers. This entails more expenses with the need to hire a car back and forth.

The interest rate varied from 1-18% for the survivors. When it came to how they would repay the loans most of them were in despair. Rekha, 32, is among 80% of the survivors interviewed during the survey showed who have little idea how to repay the loan.

Ram Temple trust accused of land scam

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Lucknow

THE Samajwadi Party (SP) and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Sunday alleged corruption worth crores by Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust members in a land deal in Ayodhya.

Presenting documents, the opposition parties claimed that a land purchased at a price of ₹2 crore was sold to the Trust at ₹18.5 crore within minutes.

Alleging corruption and money laundering, they demanded probes by the CBI and the Enforcement Directorate.

AAP leader Sanjay Singh said at a press conference in Lucknow, "A land valued at around ₹5.80 crore in Ayodhya was sold by Kusum Pathak and Harish Pathak to Sultan Ansari and Ravi Mohan Tiwari for ₹2 crore at 7.10 pm on March 18.

Just five minutes later, Ansari and Tiwari entered into an agreement for selling the same land to the Trust for ₹18.50 crore. Nowhere in the world has anyone heard about a piece of land becoming costlier by so many times, with the price rising by ₹5.50 lakh per second."

The AAP leader accused the Trust and its general secretary Champat Rai of duping countless Lord Ram devotees by misusing their donations in a land deal. It was Rai who undertook the sale agreement on behalf of the Trust.

In Ayodhya, SP leader Pawan Pandey also released the same set of documents at a press conference and demanded the arrest of those guilty of jolting the "faith of countless Ram bhakts, who have generously contributed for construction of the grand Ram Temple".

Both Ansari and Tiwari are property dealers. Ansari is considered close to Pawan Pandey, sources in Ayodhya told this newspaper. The press conferences of Singh and Pandey coincided with a meeting of the Trust in Ayodhya. When asked about the allegations, Rai told journalists, "I will only talk about what happened in the Trust's meeting pertaining to temple construction and nothing else."

COVID TRACKER

- 4.25% DAILY POSITIVITY RATE
- 4.74% WEEKLY POSITIVITY RATE
- 95.26% NATIONAL RECOVERY RATE
- 10,26,159 Active cases
- 54,531 Net decline in cases
- 19,20,477 tests conducted on Saturday

VACCINE UPDATE

1st dose	20.48 Cr
2nd dose	4.83 Cr

- 26 cr doses provided to states/UTs so far
- 1.53 crore doses still available with states/UTs to be administered
- 421 trains Oxygen Express trains with 1,734 tankers so far delivered over 30,182 MT of medical oxygen to 15 states

HELPLINE NUMBERS

1075: National helpline | **1098:** Child helpline | **14567:** Senior citizens helpline | **08046110007:** Helpline of NIMHANS for psychological support

Source: Union Health Ministry

STATES DIVERT VAX MEANT FOR 45+ TO INOCULATE 18+

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Dehradun/Srinagar/Guwahati/Ranchi

AMID short supply of Covid vaccines, states are struggling to keep the immunisation drive going. After increasing the gap between the first and second doses and halting the drive till the supplies are augmented, now some states are diverting the doses meant for the 45-plus population to the 18-45 age group.

The Odisha government a week ago announced to divert Covaxin stock meant for 45-plus people for inoculating those in the 18-45 age group as it found that more in the latter category were queuing up to get the jabs.

Other states, however, are not so forthcoming even as data reveals that vaccines were diverted to inoculate the younger population. In Uttarakhand, health department officials said 1.5 lakh doses were diverted from the 45-plus quota as supply for the 18-45 age-group had dried up. They hastened to add that the diversion had now stopped as ample stock was available, but refused to share the data citing the new guidelines issued by the Centre barring states from revealing information on stocks.

The inoculation drive for the 18-plus category received a major setback in Uttarakhand as most of the vaccination centres were shut for at least a week because of the paucity of jabs.

In Jammu and Kashmir, 4.50 lakh vaccine doses had been procured for the 18-45 age group till June 11, while 6.02 lakh people in this category had received the jabs. When asked if 1.5 additional doses administered to the younger population could have been diverted from the stock meant for the 45-plus group, Immunization Officer Dr Shahid denied that and said that vaccine diversion was not possible without the consent of the Union Health Ministry. Another health official said the gap was because hundreds of healthcare and frontline workers who had been vaccinated fell in the 18-45 age group.

In Assam, 6,77,520 doses had been procured for the 18-44 group while the number of doses administered in this category stood at 10,39,740.

Official sources said the difference of 3,62,220 was on account of frontline and health workers as well as those deployed for election duty being administered the jabs irrespective of their age. For the 45-plus category, 42,11,310 doses were received from the Centre while the number of doses administered was only 33,46,604.

"Some districts were reporting a lot of cases. As per the chief minister's directive, 88,300 Covishield doses supplied by the Centre were given to these districts to vaccinate the 18-44 group," said an official. The vaccine had been "loaned" to these districts and they will return the vaccines when they have sufficient stock, he added.

In Jharkhand, too, officials in the health department said since there was a scarcity of vaccines for the 18-44 group, they were 'borrowing' it from the quota provided by the Centre for the 45-plus category as and when required. So far, 2.10 lakh doses had been borrowed, they said.

A medic administers vaccine to a woman beneficiary during an inoculation drive, arranged by Sourav Ganguly Foundation, in Kolkata on Sunday | PTI

Vax distribution disparity: People struggle for jab

CONTINUED FROM P1

ANOTHER example of this disparity was recorded in Pune district. The district received 33 lakh doses against a population of nearly 94 lakh, but bigger agglomerates like Thane (over 1.1 crore population) received only 19.21 lakh doses.

West Bengal also showed a similarly skewed distribution pattern. In Kolkata, 24.64 lakh doses were given among a population of 44.96 lakh. In Hooghly, 50 kms from the capital and home to 48.50 lakh people, 11.52 lakh doses were given. But many districts like South Paraganas (with a population of 81.61 lakh) or Murshidabad (71 lakh) received far fewer doses.

In Hooghly, adjacent to Kolkata and home to 55 lakh, 8.84 lakh vaccinations were carried out, which was much more than vaccinations carried out in districts such as Nadia, Purba Medinapore with similar populations. Budhadeb Roy, a resident of Sinthee in Kolkata, was struggling to get a slot. "I went to a health centre in Hooghly and got vaccinated on May 5."

Patna got nearly 12.61 lakh doses for a population of 51.38 lakh. Saran district received 5.21 lakh doses against a population of 39.51 lakh. However, districts such as Gaya, Muzaffarpur and Samastipur, with a far higher population, received a fraction of the doses administered in Patna and Saran.

(With inputs from Rajesh Asnani@ Jaipur, Pranob Mondal @ Kolkata, Anurag Thakur @ Lucknow, Rajesh Thakur @ Patna & Sudhir Suryavanshi @ Mumbai)

EXPRESS READ

Char Dham Yatra may be restricted to locals

Dehradun: In view of the pandemic, Uttarakhand government is likely to allow Char Dham Yatra only for the pilgrims from three districts -- Rudraprayag, Uttarkashi and Chamoli -- where the four shrines are located. Officials said a decision in this regard is likely to be taken soon by the Chief Minister

Nod to ₹498 cr defence innovation scheme

New Delhi: Aiming to push innovation and technology development in defence and aerospace, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday approved budgetary support of `498.8 crore to Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) functioning under the Defence Innovation Organisation (DIO) for the next five years.

'Chhattisgarh PSC is centre of corruption'

Raipur: Ex-CM Raman Singh on Sunday alleged the state public service commission has turned the "centre of corrupt practices". If any hardworking aspirant gets to know the biodata of PSC chairman, he or she will never think of appearing in its exam," he said. The Congress said BJP is trying to divert attention from failures of the Centre.

As migrants stay back, Punjab faces no labour crunch for paddy sowing this year

HARPREET BAJWA @ Chandigarh

LAST year, the exodus of migrant labourers to their home towns across India after the announcement of the lockdown in March had affected paddy sowing in Punjab. But this year, paddy farmers in the state have reasons to cheer.

There is labour surplus as farm labourers from Bihar and UP, who had returned to Punjab after the lockdown restrictions were lifted, stayed back despite the deadly second wave of the pandemic as they had faced tough times back home. The surplus labour means charges for paddy transplantation are less compared to last year.

The paddy transplantation began on June 10. Last year, labour charges had doubled due to shortage of farm hands, resulting in a heavy burden on the pocket of the farmers. This year, the labourers are charging anywhere between ₹2,500 and ₹4,000 per acre compared to ₹4,000-₹6,000 last year.

Another good news for the farmers is that due to good pre-monsoon showers, they will have to depend less on tube wells for irrigating their fields. "This year there is no labour shortage... Last year, they charged high rates and we had no choice but to pay," said Harinder Singh Lakhowal, a farmer leader who has 50 acres in Ludhiana's Lakhowal village.

"Last year, the local labourers took advantage of the reverse migration and charged double the prevailing rates as paddy sowing is a specialised job," said Gurvinder Singh, who has 30 acres in Ludhiana's Kumkalan village.

After death count, now Covid-19 testing numbers fudged in Bihar, government launches probe

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @ Patna

AFTER landing in a row over doctored Covid death count, Bihar has now reported fudging in testing figures. At many health centres in Muzaffarpur, the numbers have been found to be inflated, prompting the government to launch a probe.

At a primary health centre (PHC) in Bochhaha, 3,550 rapid antigen test (RAT) kits were supplied by the government between March 1 and May 31, but the number of tests carried out in the same period was recorded to be 6,470. Similarly, a total of 5,500 RAT kits were provided to the Saraiya community health centre (CHC) between March 1 and May 31, but official records showed 6,581 persons had been tested. The irregularities continued at the Saraiya PHC also, where a total of 8,250 kits were supplied but the number of people tested was recorded to be 8,755. At Motipur CHC, only 7,400 RAT kits were supplied but records showed that a total of 8,325 people were tested while Muraul CHC received 7,875 test kits but 8,325 tests were shown to be carried out in official records. At Sakara Referral Hospital, a total number of 8,450 kits were supplied but 8,668 people were shown to have undergone the rapid antigen test.

The irregularities were detected when many people received messages of negative test reports on their mobile phones though they had not gone for testing. Interestingly, the data sheets at 18 CHCs and PHCs showed the entry in the column for mobile phone numbers against 8,231 people as 0000000000. The initial probe ordered by the district administration confirmed the irregularities. Muzaffarpur DM Pranab Kumar could not be contacted but spokesperson for the administration Kamal Kumar said an FIR had been lodged against the guilty officials and probe was still on.

PATNA RANKS 13TH IN SPREADING INFECTION

PATNA: A 'hazard map' prepared by experts of Pune-based Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) has ranked Bihar's capital as 13th among 446 cities and towns (with populations of over 1 lakh) in spreading of the Covid-19 infection. The hazard map was created to identify areas from where the pandemic can spread rapidly. Patna, which still has more than 657 active cases, is ranked first among 26 cities and towns in Bihar, followed by Muzaffarpur, Gaya and Bhagalpur. Nationally, Delhi tops the hazard index of spreading the infection followed by Mumbai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Chennai.

THREE HELD FOR ROBBERY

Three persons were held from Badhoi in Uttar Pradesh in connection with a robbery in Khandeshwar in Navi Mumbai, police said on Sunday

20.6 MILLIMETRES RAIN FALL IN CHANDIGARH ON SUNDAY

	Max	Min		Max	Min
Ahmedabad	39	28	Mumbai	29	17
Bhopal	36	24	Panaji	32	25
Jaipur	38	28	Patna	34	25
Amritsar	34	23	Lucknow	31	26
Chennai	34	28	Port Blair	30	26
Kolkata	34	27	Imphal	28	20
Srinagar	28	14	Chandigarh	33	22

Navy to join search for trapped miners

No trace of five men two weeks after a dynamite blast led to the flooding of an illegal mine in Meghalaya

PRASANTA MAZUMDAR @ Guwahati

A 10-member team of Navy divers on Sunday joined the operation to rescue five miners who have been trapped inside a coal mine in Meghalaya's East Jaintia Hills for nearly two weeks.

A dynamite blast on May 30 caused groundwater to gush into the coal pit, trapping the miners. Though the operation to rescue them has been on for the past two weeks, there has been no trace of them.

They are thought to be trapped in small horizontal pits, which are dug to extract coal. The bottom part of the vertical pit, which has a depth of about 500 feet, is still flooded. More than 50 personnel from the National Disaster Response Force, the State Disaster Response Force, and fire and emergency service and the police have been working to rescue the trapped miners for the past two weeks.

Their efforts have been hampered by incessant rains.

"We are using several pumps to drain out water, but the coal pit gets filled up again by the rainwater," East Jaintia Hills Superintendent of Police, Jagpal Singh Dhanoa told this newspaper.

Four of the five trapped miners are from Assam while one is from Tripura. A high daily wage of up to ₹1,500 draws many labourers to the illegal mines in Meghalaya.

In 2018, another coal mine tragedy at Ksan, also in East Jaintia Hills led to several deaths. At least 15 miners were trapped. While five of them managed to escape, decomposed bodies of two were pulled out. There was no trace of the rest. The operation, suspended on March 2, 2019, after more than 75 days, was one of the longest rescue efforts in the country. The Army and the Navy were part of the operation.

Despite a ban by the National Green Tribunal, rat-hole coal mining remains widespread in the state. The mines are owned by very powerful people with political ties. A deep vertical shaft is dug till coal seams are found in the rat-hole mining. Once the seams are found, coal is taken out through small holes along the horizontal line of the coal seams. Ever since the ban, 144 cases of illegal coal mining and more than 1,500 cases of illegal transportation of coal have been registered.

Manager still on the run

Srinagar: The police have arrested the owner of the coal mine, Shining Langstang, and charged him with violation of the NGT order banning unscientific mining and transportation of coal. The mine manager is on the run and a lookout notice has been issued, a senior police officer said.

A team of Navy rescuers prepare to descent the 500-feet-deep illegal coal mine on Sunday | PTI

Himanta visits family of girls found hanging, vows action

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Guwahati

ASSAM Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Sunday visited the family of two sisters who were found hanging from a tree in Assam's Kokrajhar district.

Sarma said it appears to be a case of murder or suicide under pressure.

"The two tribal girls died under mysterious circumstances. Prima facie, it looks like a case of murder or suicide under duress," Sarma told journalists.

"Lives have been lost. We want the police to find out why the lives have been lost and for whom," he said.

The bodies of the siblings were found inside a forest in Abhayakuti village under Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) on Friday night.

The police have detained five persons in connection with the incident. Sarma said two of them have deleted their mobile records, but the police have evidence that they spoke to the girls.

Sarma said he talked to the Inspector General of Police, BTR and Superintendent of Police, Kokrajhar to take the probe to its logical end. "According to the family, there was no reason for them to commit suicide. If it is a case of murder, the murderers will be punished. If it was suicide, we would like to know the reasons behind it," he said.

Sarma said the government is not taking the death of the two girls from an indigenous community lightly. "Many families live under constant insecurity in lower Assam. I came here to send across a message that this government will not tolerate any kind of torture of the poor," Sarma added.

MILITANCY

13 security forces killed in J&K in 2021

FAYAZ WANI @ Srinagar

THOUGH officials have claimed that the security forces have an upper hand against militants and that the militancy is on a decline, as many as 13 security personnel lost their lives to violence by militants this year.

Of them, seven were from Jammu and Kashmir Police, three from the CRPF and three from the Army.

They were killed in nine separate incidents in the Valley, three of which took place in south Kashmir, three in Srinagar, two in Sopore and one in central Kashmir's Budgam district.

According to the statistics, of the 13 security force casualties in Valley in militancy violence this year, only two were killed in encounters. An army man and a Special Police Officer (SPO) of J&K police were killed in two separate encounters. The SPO was killed in an encounter with militants in Beerwah area of central Kashmir's Budgam district on February 17 while the army man was killed in a firefight with militants in south Kashmir's Shopian district.

Eleven security men were killed in seven militant attacks across the Valley including in south, central and north Kashmir. An Army soldier was killed and three others were injured in an IED blast carried out by militants at Shamsipora area.

Return of turncoats sparks uneasiness in Trinamool too

PRANAB MONDAL @ Kolkata

MUKUL Roy's *ghar wapsi* has sparked concerns not only in the BJP but also in West Bengal's ruling Trinamool Congress.

The worry in the BJP camp is over the possibility of more TMC turncoats in the party following Roy's footsteps.

Meanwhile, the return of Roy and the possibility of others following him have caused unease among a section of TMC workers who are opposed to the induction of "traitors" who attacked the party while campaigning for the recent Assembly elections.

Concerns have mounted after former Trinamool Congress minister Rajib Banerjee, who is now in the saffron camp, held talks with TMC spokesperson Kunal Ghosh on Saturday

"Now he (Rajib) is criticising BJP for its divisive politics. But

before the election, he organised a rally comprising Hindu hardliners and used the Election Commission against TMC workers in Domjur. He visited Kunal's house but it doesn't mean that he washed all his sins by taking a holy dip in the Ganges," said Serampore Kalyan Banerjee, a TMC MP.

Rajib contested from Domjur constituency for the BJP, but failed to win.

There is also strong buzz that former TMC MLA Sabyasachi Dutta, who joined the BJP, is set to follow his mentor Roy into the party. It was Roy, who is known for his ability to poach functionaries from rival camps, who brought Dutta to the saffron party.

Some in the TMC have already raised their voice against Dutta's possible induction. TMC minister Sujit Bose is one of them. "The party will take the decision. But if the leadership wants to know my opinion, I will let them know my stance on his return," said Dutta. Even when Dutta was in the TMC, a rift between him and Bose had surfaced on many occasions. While campaigning for the election, Dutta had aggressively attacked Bose.

Not just Dutta and Rajib, at least eight MLAs and an MP from north Bengal are expected to jump ship to the Trinamool Conrgess as an after-effect of Roy's return to his old battleground.

Rift in Rajasthan Cong over phone tapping

RAJESH ASNANI @ Jaipur

THE phone tapping row has once again erupted in Rajasthan. But this time it's not the BJP, but a Congress MLA from the Sachin Pilot camp who has come forward with allegations that phones of MLAs are being tapped.

Congress MLA from Jaipur district, Ved Prakash Solanki, a vocal supporter of Sachin Pilot, claimed that some legislators had told him about their phones being tapped. Solanki, however, declined to name the MLAs. He also had no idea who was tapping the phones and on whose orders. "I do not know if my phone is being tapped or not? I am also not aware if the state government is involved in phone tapping or not. But some legislators told me about their phones being recorded," Solanki remarked.

Known to be a close confidant of Pilot, Solanki's comments have sparked quite a row. These charges have come at a time when Pilot is said to be deeply upset and is camping in Delhi. Pilot and his loyalists have been demanding a reshuffle and expansion in the Ashok Gehlot ministry and political appointments in Rajasthan as a means to rehabilitate and accommodate leaders loyal to Pilot in the state.

However, in a sign of the deepening rift within the ruling Congress, the MLA's complaints about phones being tapped have drawn a sharp reaction from the Gehlot camp. Transport minister Pratap Singh Khachariyawas has challenged MLA Solanki to name those MLAs who have claimed that their phones have been tapped. Khachariyawas sharply denied that the state government is behind the phone tapping.

Uddhav to lead, CM's post non-negotiable in MVA govt: Raut

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Mumbai

CLARIFYING that there is no agreement on sharing the chief ministerial post with alliance partners, the Shiv Sena on Sunday said Uddhav Thackeray will remain the CM for five years.

Shiv Sena leader and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Raut wrote in his weekly column *Roktok* that there are speculations that after 2.5 years, the NCP will demand the chief minister's post and that will lead to the collapse of the government. "However, the chief ministerial post will remain with Shiv Sena and Uddhav Thackeray will be the only chief minister for a full five-year term," Raut said.

"Shiv Sena's chief minister in MVA will continue for five years. It is a commitment and there is no sharing of the post. It is non-negotiable."

After Uddhav Thackeray met Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently in Delhi, there have been speculations that the Shiv Sena and the BJP may join hands again.

Sanjay Raut said Uddhav Thackeray's meeting with PM Narendra Modi carries a message to Opposition in Maharashtra and the alliance partners of the Maha Vikas Aghadi as well. He said that when Uddhav Thackeray sought an appointment with Modi, the Prime Minister immediately confirmed it. "It shows that the Uddhav Thackeray shares a cordial relationship with Prime Minister Narendra Modi," Raut said.

Raut said Modi and Amit Shah were not against the formation of the Maha Vikas Aghadi government under Uddhav's leadership, and therefore, they did not obstruct it.

On the question of the alliance partners expanding their bases, Raut said, "We have now merged into one political outfit. All three have the right to expand their base."

EXPRESS READ

Six suspected arms smugglers arrested

Lucknow: The Uttar Pradesh Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) arrested six people in Pratapgarh district and claimed to have busted an inter-state gang of arms smugglers. The ATS said it got a tip-off that some members of the gang were to meet arms suppliers from Munger in Bihar.

53,000 books to be donated on Maha politico's birthday

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Mumbai

IN an age when people, including politicians, use birthdays as an occasion to flaunt their wealth, the head of a local unit Maharashtra Navnirman Sena decided to celebrate his party president Raj Thackeray's birthday in a different way.

On the 53rd birthday of his boss, MNS Navi Mumbai unit president Gajanan Kale, will distribute 53,000 books.

"I personally got the rich collections of books. I love reading and distributing good books to people. So, this year, rather than celebrating our party president Raj Thackeray's birthday in the traditional way, decided to celebrate by gifting books," Kale said.

He said during the pandemic, as people stayed in their houses, many started reading books. "Many people invented their respective hobbies such as reading, music etc," Kale said.

"We want to gift the books of people choice. We do not want to donate a random book to any person. Therefore, we have started registration asking people to inform their choice of book and that book will be gifted to that particular person. One family will get one book only," said MNS leader.

PRECIOUS COMMODITY

People gather to collect drinking water from a tanker at Sanjay Camp Chanakyapuri, New Delhi on Sunday amid a water crisis in the city | PTI

SURVIVED BY 39 WIVES

Head of 'world's largest family' dies

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Guwahati

ZIONA Chana from Mizoram, who headed a family of 39 wives and 94 children—reportedly the world's biggest—passed away on Sunday.

He was 76. He breathed his last at a hospital in Aizawl. He was suffering from diabetes and high blood pressure. Ziona fell sick on June 7 and was not able to eat anything. Since June 11, he has been unconscious. Some doctors from Aizawl had visited him at his residence in remote Baktawng. The doctors suggested he should be admitted to a hospital and put in the intensive care unit. An ambulance sent from Aizawl brought him to the Trinity Hospital at 2.50 pm on Sunday, but he died soon. Apart from 94 children, Ziona leaves behind 14 daughters-in-law, 33 grandchildren and one great grandchild. All members of the family live in a 100-room house amid the hills. Ziona was featured in *Ripley's Believe It or Not*.

Ziona was the leader of a Christian sect, called Chana pawl, which allowed its male members to be polygamous.

Ziona Chana poses for a photo with his family

PGIMER to conduct survey on infection rate

The Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER) will soon start a serological survey of those between the ages of two and 18 years to determine Covid-19 infection rate among children in Chandigarh. The expected sample size is around 2,500. The samples will be checked for the presence of antibodies against the SARS-CoV-2 pathogen. The test results would be declared within a month. As children have not been vaccinated, and given that a possible next wave of the pandemic is likely to affect children more than adults, the result of the survey will help understand the prevalence of antibodies in them.

CHANDIGARH DIARY

HARPREET BAJWA
Our correspondent in Chandigarh
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LPG users can choose distributors of choice for refill

The Union government has decided to introduce refill booking portability for LPG consumers in Chandigarh. The city will be one of the five in the country where consumers will have a choice of deciding the distributor for a refill of their LPG cylinders. The other four cities are Coimbatore, Gurugram, Pune and Ranchi. Customers can change their distributor by visiting the web portal or the mobile app of the oil marketing company. Using their registered login, customers can choose a distributor and opt for the porting of their LPG connection. Meanwhile, the distributor will have the option of contacting the customer to convince them not to leave. If the customer is convinced, they can withdraw the portability request within the stipulated time of three days.

High-tech garbage sorting centre opens

Chandigarh's first material recovery facility-cum-garbage transfer station has been inaugurated at the 3BRD sewage treatment plant site in the Industrial Area, Phase II. The door-to-door waste collection vehicles would bring in segregated waste (dry and wet) to the facility, which has a dedicated space for sorting out recyclable items from the dry waste. What's left after the recovery of recyclable materials would then be transported to the compost plant in Sector 25, Dadu Majra. The construction of two more such facilities is underway

Univ to provide free education to Covid orphans

Th Responding to the widespread personal and financial crisis caused by the Covid pandemic, the management of IEC University near Solan has decided to provide free education to students who have lost their sole earning parent to Covid-19. Financial and academic background of the students will be considered while determining those who are eligible to be covered under the scheme. Students found eligible will have all their tuition expenses covered by the university to help ensure that they complete their education. The university will also support them in finding a suitable job upon the completion of the course.

3,787
bone fragments, belonging to 17 victims, found under the house of a suspected serial killer on the outskirts of Mexico City

GLOBAL WEATHER
LR: Light Rain • HR: Heavy Rain • TDS: Thundershower • LC: Light Cloud • SNY: Sunny

Beijing	26	22	TDS	Los Angeles	30	19	SNY
Colombo	29	27	LC	Melbourne	15	10	LC
Dhaka	31	26	TDS	Moscow	26	16	TDS
Dubai	39	30	SNY	New York	22	18	TDS
Houston	34	25	TDS	Singapore	31	26	TDS
Istanbul	22	15	HR	Toronto	21	15	LR
London	28	14	SNY	Washington	31	19	LC

G7 leaders agree on over 1 billion vaccines, taxing corporations

Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, UK and US to donate jabs to poorer nations | Leaders propose minimum tax of 15% on large multinational companies

CARBIS BAY

LEADERS of the Group of Seven wealthy nations staked their claim on Sunday to leading the world out of the coronavirus pandemic and crisis, pledging more than 1 billion coronavirus vaccine doses to poorer nations, vowing to help developing countries grow while fighting climate change and backing a minimum tax on multinational firms.

At the group's first face-to-face meeting in two years, the leaders dangled promises of support for global health, green energy, infrastructure and education.

The leaders wanted to show that international cooperation is back after the upheavals caused by the pandemic and the unpredictability of former US President Donald Trump. And they wanted to convey that the club of wealthy democracies ' Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States ' is a better friend to poorer nations than authoritarian rivals such as China.

Speaking at the end of the three-day summit in southwest England, U.S. President Joe Biden, who was making his first foreign trip as leader, said it was an 'extraordinary, collaborative and productive meeting.' British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, the summit's host, praised the 'fantastic degree of harmony' among the group. He added, "It's not good enough for us to just rest on our laurels and talk about how important those values are. What we as the G7 need to do is demonstrate the benefits of democracy and freedom and human rights to the world." But health and environmental campaigners were unimpressed by the details in the leaders' final communique.

"Faced with the biggest health emergency in a century and a climate catastrophe that is destroying our planet, they have completely failed to meet the challenges of our times," said Max Lawson, the head of inequality policy at international aid group Oxfam.

Despite Johnson's call to "vaccinate the world" by the end of 2022 the promise of 1 billion doses for vaccine-hungry countries ' coming both directly and through the international COVAX program ' falls far short of the 11 billion doses the World Health Organization said is needed to vaccinate at least 70% of the world's population and truly end the pandemic.

Half of the billion-dose pledge is coming from the United States and 100 million from Britain. Canada said it also would give 100 million doses, and France pledged 60 million. The vaccines are due to be delivered by the end of 2022, but Biden said the leaders were clear that the commitments they made to donate doses wouldn't be the end.

The G7 also backed a minimum tax of at least 15% on large multinational companies to stop corporations from using tax havens to avoid taxes. Biden also wanted to persuade fellow democratic leaders to present a more unified front to compete economically with Beijing and strongly call out China's 'nonmarket policies and human rights abuses.' *AP*

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, right, welcomes French President Emmanuel Macron at the G7 summit in England. (Clockwise from top) US President Joe Biden, Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel, PM of Italy Mario Draghi, Japan's PM Yoshihide Suga and British PM Boris Johnson |Pics: AFP & AP/PTI

ALLIES RELIEVED TO HAVE U.S. BACK

America's allies were visibly relieved to have the US back as an engaged international player after the 'America First' policy of the Trump administration. "The US is back, and democracies of the world are standing together," Biden said as he arrived in the UK. At the G-7, Johnson described Biden as a 'breath of fresh air.' French President Emmanuel Macron, after speaking one-to-one with Biden, said, "It's great to have a US president part of the club and very willing to cooperate."

CRITICISED AT SUMMIT, CHINA HITS BACK

Beijing: China on Sunday asserted that the days when global decisions were dictated by a "small group" of countries are long gone, hitting back at the G7 summit where Beijing was at the centre of severe criticism over the Covid origins, human rights violations and its mega Belt and Road Initiative. While there is no direct response by the Chinese government here, Global Times quoted statement issued by China's Embassy in London, rebutting G-7 criticism against Beijing. "We always believe that countries, big or small, strong or weak, poor or rich, are equals, and that world affairs should be handled through consultation by all countries. The days when global decisions were dictated by a small group of countries are long gone," the embassy said in the statement. PTI

JOHNSON PRAISES G7 HARMONY

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said there has been a 'fantastic degree of harmony' among G7 leaders. He said the wealthy democracies' group will demonstrate the value of democracy and human rights to the rest of the world and help 'the world's poorest countries to develop themselves in a way that is clean and green and sustainable.'

SHADOW OF BREXIT

Boris Johnson, the host of the summit, wanted the meeting to fly the flag for a 'Global Britain,' his government's push to give the midsized country outsized global influence. However, Brexit cast a shadow over that goal during the summit. EU leaders and US President Joe Biden voiced concerns about problems with new UK-EU trade rules that have heightened tensions in Northern Ireland.

'HUMANITY ON VERGE OF DESTABILISING PLANET'

Naturalist David Attenborough addressed the leaders by video on Sunday, warning that humanity is 'on the verge of destabilising the entire planet.' "If that is so, the decisions we make this decade...are the most important in human history," he said. On Saturday, large crowds of surfers and kayakers took to the sea in a mass protest to urge better protections for the world's oceans, while thousands beat drums as they marched outside the summit's media center in Falmouth.

Spain's right wing rejects any pardons to Catalan leaders

Thousands gather at a protest against the Spanish government's plan to issue pardons to imprisoned Catalan separatist leaders in Madrid on Sunday | AP/PTI

MADRID

THOUSANDS in Madrid are protesting the Spanish government's plan to issue pardons to a dozen Catalan separatist leaders convicted for their roles in the biggest challenge to the country's unity in recent history.

The demonstration has been organized by a civil society group in defence of the nation's unity, and it chose a central square that has become a symbol for far-right political rallies.

Leaders of the center to far-right opposition to Socialist Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez are joining the protest at Col'n Square, which boasts one of the nation's largest national flags.

Sanchez hasn't announced pardons for the 12 political and civil society leaders who in October 2017 pushed ahead with a banned referendum on independence for the northeastern region of Catalonia and then declared independence based on its results.

But he has defended the possible move as a way to bring Catalans and Spaniards closer together after the divisive convictions that put most of the Catalan leaders behind bars. Sanchez is also facing criticism in his own Socialist camp, where the move is seen as a risky political gamble.

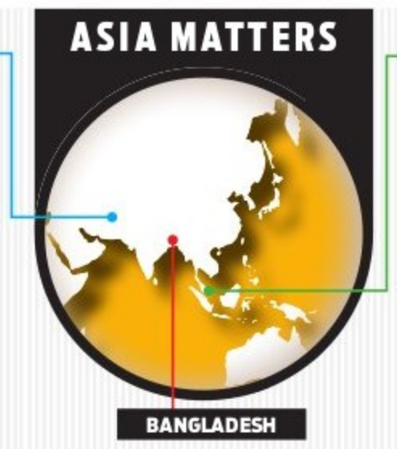
While more than 60per cent of Spaniards oppose the pardons and only 29.5per cent back them, according to a recent poll for El Mundo newspaper, surveys in the northeastern region show support for the move ranging in between 60per cent to 70per cent of Catalans. Detractors say the separatists have not shown any remorse for their defiance to the Spanish Constitution and that Sanchez is making concessions to them in exchange for support in the national parliament. *AP*

ASIA MATTERS

AFGHANISTAN

IS group claims sticky bomb attacks in Kabul

Kabul: The Islamic State (IS) group has claimed responsibility for bombing two minivans in a mostly Shiite neighbourhood in the Afghan capital that killed seven people. Among the dead were two staffers of Afghanistan's state-run film company, a colleague said on Sunday. In a statement issued on Saturday, Afghanistan's IS affiliate said its operatives blew up two minivans carrying 'disbeliever Shiites' using sticky bombs. Film director Sahra Karimi in a tweet on Sunday said Fatima Mohammadi and Tayiba Musavi, who worked for the Afghan Film Organization, were among the six killed in the first attack. Their families identified their burned bodies in the forensic hospital of Kabul, she said. The Saturday attacks targeted minivans on the same road about 2 km apart in a neighbourhood in western Kabul. AP



BANGLADESH

Schools, colleges to remain closed till June 30

Dhaka: The Bangladesh government has extended the closure of all schools and colleges till June 30, in view of a surge in Covid cases. On March 17 last year, Bangladesh had closed all schools to contain the spread of Covid. All examinations were cancelled. In a notification on Saturday, the Education Ministry said all primary, secondary, higher secondary and college-level institutions, including Ebtedayee and Qawmi madrasas, would remain closed till June 30, The Dhaka Tribune newspaper reported. PTI

MALAYSIA

Man accused of inspiring kidnapping expelled

Paris/Malaysia: A Frenchman accused of inspiring the kidnapping in France of a girl whose mother had lost custody was expelled by Malaysia on Sunday. France had issued an Interpol arrest notice for Remy Daillet-Wiedemann, who was detained on immigration charges by Malaysia after living there for several years. Daillet, his pregnant partner and children were placed on a flight on Sunday, a Malaysian official said. Prosecutors accuse him of helping organise the kidnapping of an 8-year-old girl in France. Daillet runs a website calling for the overthrow of the French government and supports extremist QAnon-style conspiracy theories. His lawyer released a statement before their expulsion denouncing France for exercising political pressure on Malaysia. AP

15 dead in artillery strike in northern Syria hosp

AFRIN (SYRIA)

THE death toll from an artillery strike on a hospital in northern Syria has risen to at least 15, medical officials said Sunday. The shelling, a day earlier, caused widespread destruction and knocked out the hospital's maternity ward and surgery unit.

It was not immediately clear who was behind the attack that also wounded 43 and came from areas where both government troops and Kurdish-led fighters are deployed.

Al-Shifaa hospital is in the northern town of Afrin, in an area controlled by Turkey-backed Syrian opposition fighters. Much of the ceiling of the facility collapsed, and electricity cables dangled in a main corridor.

The delivery room, the children's section, and the first aid hall suffered the most ' leaving hospital beds covered with rubble.

Blood stained the floor of one debris-filled room, while a mangled wheelchair and a soiled stretcher were piled up in an operating theater.

The hospital director, Dr. Hussam Adnan, said two shells damaged the maternity ward and the surgery unit, while a rocket hit the clinics. The hospital had been crowded at the time of the shelling, and patients and the wounded were evacuated to other hospitals.

"This was a condemned terrorist act that targeted civilians," said Adnan, adding that the hospital serves the town of Afrin and its countryside, an area home to about 350,000 people. Over 350 births take place every month at the hospital, all free of charge, he said. SAMS, which said 11 of its staff were injured, called for an investigation into the attack. *AP*

NAFTALI BENNETT SWORN IN ISRAEL'S PM

JERUSALEM

NAFTALI Bennett was on Sunday sworn in Israel's new Prime Minister, ousting Benjamin Netanyahu from power after an uninterrupted 12 years at the helm of affairs.

Bennett, the 49-year-old leader of the right-wing Yamina party, took oath of office after the Knesset (Parliament) elected him as the 13th Prime Minister of Israel by a 60-59 vote in the 120-member house. One lawmaker abstained. His government has 27 ministers, nine of them women.

The new government — an unprecedented coalition of ideologically divergent political parties drawn from the Right, the Left and the Centre, along with an Arab party — has a razor-thin majority in a 120-member house.

Mickey Levy of Yesh Atid party was elected as the speaker with the support of 67 lawmakers. Bennett presented his ministers in the Knesset (Israeli parliament) in a speech constantly interrupted by supporters of Netanyahu, 71. Amid incessant heckling from rival bloc's lawmakers, Bennett said that he is proud "of the ability to sit with people of different opinions". *PTI*

Netanyahu vows to return to power

Outgoing Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu is vowing to lead his Likud Party back to power. In a speech to parliament, he made it clear he has no plans on giving up leadership of the party. AP

Hamas to maintain 'armed resistance'

Gaza City: Islamic militant group Hamas said it will confront the new Israeli government. Fawzi Barhoum, spokesman of the group, said on Sunday any Israeli government is 'a settler occupier entity that must be resisted by all forms of resistance, foremost of which is armed resistance.' Hamas and Israel fought an 11-day war last month. They have fought a total of four wars since Hamas, which seeks Israel's destruction, seized control of Gaza in 2007 from the rival Palestinian Authority. AP

EXPRESS READ

Wildfires blaze in Siberia, Russian Far East

Moscow: Russian emergency workers fought wildfires burning Sunday on more than 550 sq km of territory mostly in Siberia and the Far East. The state agency responsible for fighting forest fires, Avialesookhrana, said the largest blaze was in the far northeast's Sakha Republic, where 34,000 hectares (74,000 acres) were on fire. The Irkutsk region in Siberia had fires encompassing about 20,000 hectares (49,500 acres), the agency said. There were no immediate reports of deaths or residential damage in the sparsely populated regions. AP

12 killed, 150 injured in powerful gas explosion in China

BEIJING

A POWERFUL gas line explosion ripped through a residential neighbourhood in central China's Hubei Province on Sunday early morning, killing at least 12 people and injuring 150 others, including 39 critically. The blast took place at about 6:30 am local time in the Zhangwan district of Shiyan city in Hubei province, killing 12 people and trapping a large number of people under the rubble of their homes.

Authorities have rescued nearly 150 people from the area, including 39 with serious injuries and rushed them to hospitals, state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

Chinese President Xi Jinping called for a thorough probe into the cause of the blast and ordered all-out efforts to rescue the injured. Images and video footages circulating on social media platform Weibo showed rescue workers pulling out people from the wreckage of flattened houses.

The explosion, which took place at a two-story building built in the early 1990s that includes pharmacies, restaurants and other businesses, destroyed and affected residents in nearby buildings, state-run Global Times reported. People from 913 households close to the explosion site have been evacuated.

Workers search for victims in a building damaged by a gas line explosion in Shiyan in central China's Hubei province on Sunday | AFP

> **In light of numerous accidents at companies and on campuses, all must work together to shoulder their responsibilities, strengthen political comprehension and root out the causes of such hazards**
>
> Xi Jinping, Chinese President

"Hearing the loud bang, I immediately scrabbled beneath the table, thinking it was an earthquake," a resident surnamed Liu, who owns a small restaurant some 20 metres away from the explosion site, told the Global Times.

A video of the explosion site published by the media outlet youth.cn showed the horrifying scenes of houses being ruined into big concrete chunks and piles of broken wood, and the air ticking with dust.

Gas explosions, especially from poorly maintained pipelines, occur in various parts for China every year. The worst being the 2015 explosions in Tianjin port in which 173 people were killed and hundreds of others injured. *PTI*

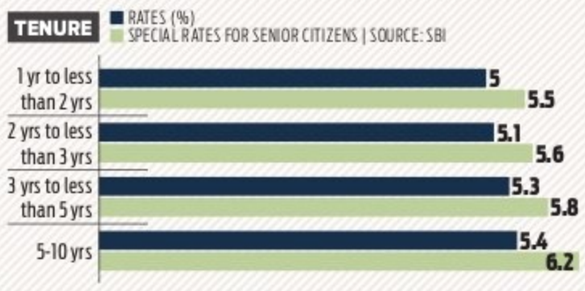
Pope wants food aid to reach people of Tigray

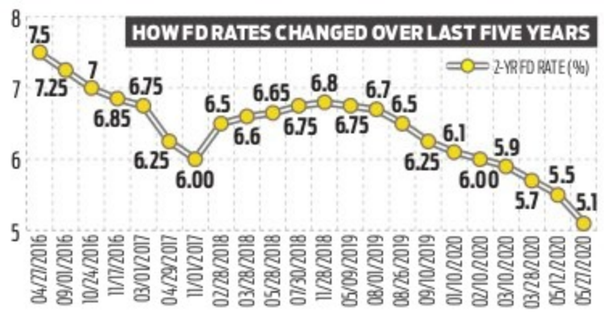
Rome: Pope Francis demanded on Sunday that humanitarian aid reach hungry people in the war-torn Tigray region of Ethiopia, where Ethiopian and Eritrean soldiers are blocking food deliveries and other aid. Francis called for an immediate end to the fighting in Tigray, return of social harmony and for 'all food aid and health care assistance to be guaranteed.' At his Sunday noon blessing, Francis said he was thinking of the people of Tigray who have been 'struck by a grave humanitarian crisis that has exposed the poorest to famine. AP

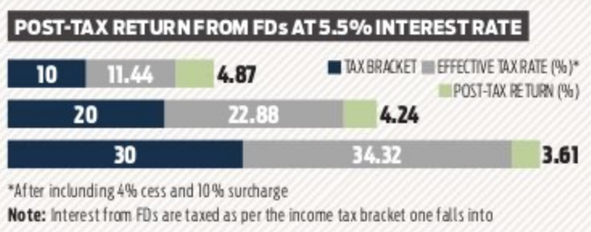
₹4,300 cr That is how much Ruchi Soya, which is owned by Baba Ramdev-led Patanjali Ayurveda, is looking to raise through share sale, according to multiple reports.

MODERATING RETURNS

According to market experts, investors need to temper their expectation from debt instruments as rates/yields are unlikely to go up anytime soon







*After inclunding 4% cess and 10% surcharge

Note: Interest from FDs are taxed as per the income tax bracket one falls into

SMALL SAVINGS SCHEMES RATES FOR Q1 2021-22

Savings Instruments	Maturity (years)	Interest Rate (%)
Savings deposit	NA	4%
1-yr term deposit	1	5.5
2-yr term deposit	2	5.5
3-yr term deposit	3	5.5
5-yr term deposit	5	6.7
Recurring deposit	5	5.8
Monthly Income Scheme (MIS)	5	6.6
Public Provident Fund (PPF)	15	7.1
Kisan Vikas Patra#	10.33	6.9
National Savings Scheme (NSC)	5	6.8
Senior Citizen Savings Scheme	5	7.4
Sukanya Samriddhi Account Scheme	21	7.6

#Current tenure is 124 months | Source: RBI

DEBT FUND PERFORMANCE	AVERAGE CATEGORY RETURNS (%)			
Category	1-yr	3-yr	5-yr	10-yr
Long duration funds	6.18	10.28	8.77	8.7
Medium duration	7.68	5.49	6.74	7.73
Short duration	6.85	6.69	6.58	7.79
Ultra short duration	3.91	5.57	5.93	7.66
Dynamic bond funds	5.68	8.02	7.33	8.42

Investment options you can look at beyond FDs when rates are low

One may consider shifting a part of FD corpus to small savings schemes for better returns

DIPAK MONDAL @ New Delhi

A five-year fixed deposit (FD) started in April 2016 would have fetched you 7% interest, but now if you want to reinvest the same amount in an FD, the bank would offer you a meagre 5.4% interest.

The gradual fall in FD rates has caused a lot of distress to depositors, especially senior citizens who park a large sum of their retirement corpus in 'safer' FDs to earn monthly income. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has been lowering interest rates in order to boost growth. While it has helped borrowers, the relief has come at the cost of depositors.

In the last three years, the RBI has cut the repo rates (the rate at which banks borrow from RBI) by 225 basis points to 4% now, resulting in both lending and deposit rates to fall sharply during this period. With the economy in the woods and a likely moderate inflation in 2021-22 most debt and money market experts believe that interest rate cycle is unlikely to change soon, and deposit rates would remain in these levels.

Worringly, interest rates from small savings schemes, which continue to offer better returns than FDs, may also fall going forward.

Looking for alternatives

What should risk-averse investors, who typically park their money in bank FDs or small savings schemes do to earn better returns without taking undue risks? The trouble is that the returns from the whole fixed income category have come down sharply, thanks to falling interest rates as well as yields on government bonds, which act as benchmarks for deciding interest rates on small savings schemes like Public Provident Funds (PPF), National Savings Schemes (NSC), etc.

As things are today, it is unlikely that either the interest rates or the bond yields would rise anytime soon. However, there are still scopes for some manoeuvre for depositors. Without getting out of their comfort zone as far as their risk-taking ability is concerned, one can shift some of his/her corpus out of FDs to some small savings schemes as per their investment goal.

Small savings schemes are still offering better returns compared to bank FDs. A five-year deposit under the small savings schemes is offering 6.7% compared to 5.4% offered by banks like SBI. A monthly Income Scheme (MIS) under small savings schemes offers 6.6%. Schemes like NSC and Senior Citizen Savings Schemes —both of which have a tenure of five years — are offering 6.8% and 7.4%, respectively.

For senior citizens looking for a regular income, Pradhan Matri Vaya Vandan Yojna (PMVVY) is a good option, says Shalini Dhawan, financial planner and co-founder of Plan Ahead Wealth Advisors. PMVVY is a pension plan which offers 7.4% per annum, payable every month. It has a 10-year lock-in period. "While 10-year lock-in may dissuade some people, the fact that the scheme returns the principal amount to beneficiary in the case of the demise of the pensioner, it is a product worth evaluating," says Shalini Dhawan. Non-convertible debentures and corporate FDs also offer better interest rates than banks, but investors need to be careful not to get swayed by the higher rates offered by corporates that are rated low by rating agencies.

Debt funds

Debt funds are not risk-free as many would have us believe, but they are still an option between an FD and an equity. As Mahendra Jajoo of Mirae Assets says, as long as investors understand the risks in debt funds, and they come forward not with the intention of only preserving their capital, there is money to be made in debt funds. According to Sankaran Naren, CIO, ICICI Prudential AMC, debt has a major role to play in one's asset allocation.

"Investors can consider investing in low duration, dynamically-managed duration products or floating rate funds which tend to be relatively immune to interest rate movements," he says.

Dhawan further adds that investors with low-risk appetite can look for schemes which are hold-to-maturity or target date debt funds. These schemes, she says, have lower volatility, considering that the bonds in these schemes will be bought and then held till maturity.

In the case of debt funds there are tax benefits, too.

While interest earned on FDs and small savings schemes such as SCSSs and NSC are taxed as per an individual's income tax slab, long-term capital gains (gains made after selling the units of such funds after holding them for three or more years) is taxed at an effective rate of 23.2% (20% tax+12% surcharge +4% cess).

MONEY-WISE

USING BAFs TO RIDE VOLATILITY

THE youthful bravado of Rishabh Pant, Mohammed Siraj and Washington Sundar was nicely tempered and balanced by the experience and patience of Ajinkya Rahane, Cheteshwar Pujara and Ravichandran Ashwin during the Indian cricket team's historic Test series win earlier this year. Therein lies the message that it is necessary to blend caution with aggression and respond appropriately based on the situation.

The same principle applies even while investing in mutual funds. I remember meeting a senior personnel of an international Asset Management Company (AMC) more than a decade ago. Over a leisurely lunch, he expressed his surprise at the relatively limited exposure Indian mutual fund investors had in hybrid mutual funds. I had opined that it was merely a matter of time before the transition would take place as the industry was evolving rapidly.

Soon thereafter, Balanced Funds (now renamed Hybrid Equity Funds) gained in popularity and rewarded investors seeking the risk profile it offered, fairly well. But the fact remained that with no upside equity holding restriction, some AMCs were running it literally like a pure equity fund thus exposing investors to higher risk than they had signed up for. In more recent years and post the creation of this new category of hybrid funds around half a decade ago, Balanced Advantage Funds (BAF) which are inherently open ended dynamic asset allocation funds have also become popular. It seeks to use time tested mechanisms using a hybrid investment model to capture equity upsides even while casting a safety net on the downside.

The corpus of a BAF is allocated dynamically to equity and debt securities, based on certain predetermined market valuation and analysis tools. Some AMCs use the Price to Earnings (P/E) Ratio while some others use the Price to Book (P/B) Ratio as their base for determining the asset allocation mix. Then there are some that use a kind of hybrid model, incorporating both, boosted further by trend analysis.

For the sake of easier comprehension, let us assume that a BAF starts off by investing 33 per cent in pure equity and 33 per cent in arbitrage to keep gross equity investments at or above 65 per cent while investing the rest in debt securities. Their long term gains thus attract equity taxation of 10 per cent as against debt taxation of 20 per cent (with indexation).

However, like any other Dynamic Asset Allocation Fund, BAFs too have the flexibility to dynamically shift the corpus from equity to debt and vice-versa. The underlying theme though is to seek capital appreciation, while guarding against volatility.

To put matters in perspective, it is worth noting that the average fall in returns in the BAF category was around half of that of the large, medium and small cap categories of funds when the markets slipped hard during March and April a year ago.

Well, this is Part-1 of the series. In next fortnight's column we shall proceed to take a closer look at some of the BAF products on offer from AMCs, their dynamics and performances.

FINANCIAL ADVICE

ASHOK KUMAR
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How to steer clear of the bull market talk

RAJAS KELKAR

SHARE prices are scaling dizzy heights. That is perhaps an understatement if we go back just over a year and look up. Investors are turning a blind eye to the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic hardship it is bringing to everyday lives. The year 2020-21 went down in history as the worst year for economic growth. However, there is something that investors see ahead that most individuals in India do not see. After all, if everyone had the same information, most of you would have invested in the stock market on 22 March 2020 when share prices hit bottom.

With a bull market, there are stories. They start with something like 'Had you invested xx in ABC company a few months or years ago and end with 'you would have been a millionaire by now.'

The other set of stories would be about fear of missing out or FOMO. 'You are missing out on a rally of a lifetime' or 'Young people are making money, where are you?' are some examples.

These stories are perhaps true. This column has mentioned such ideas before to explain why investing is more important than just saving money.

Those who are actively trading in the stock market would continue doing it. However, this week's message is more for those fence-sitters. You are watching something spectacular unfolding. But there are a few things you need to bear in mind before you take that first step to cross the fence.

There is a lot of information asymmetry. Those active in the market know what it takes to make money and lose money. They have a history and sense of it too. They have access to data, and they know more about risk than you do.

But talk to any stockbroker, and they will say that only 20 per cent of the total registered investors are actively trading in the market. That number may not be more than 60 or 70 lakh. That is a relatively small number if you consider crores of people in the middle class in India.

That does not mean you need to sit out too. The only way out is to make yourself aware of things. While it is nearly impossible to know it all, you must learn about valuable information that could drive you towards rationality. For example, several authors have said that money makes us all emotional. To explain, Nobel laureate Daniel Kahneman writes in his book 'Thinking fast and slow' that our brain has two sets of cognitive settings. The default one is the 'fast thinking mode. The last bit of our brain takes decisions for us. Our response to a situation is instantaneous. That fast-thinking setting dictates it. He argues that our brain takes 60 per cent of our decisions this way. But, our brain also has a 'slow thinking' ability. It rationalises events and prompts a measured response. We can use our 'slow thinking' part of the brain more than the 'fast thinking' that can lead to better financial decisions.

That is needed in personal finance. Emotions play a significant part in Indian households when it comes to money. A survey by the RBI committee on Household Finance revealed that most households did not have any retirement plans a few years ago. Instead, their retirement plans depend on the success of their children.

Letting your slow thinking work does not mean you remain a fence sitter for life. On the contrary, investing your money in equity assets over the long term is the best way to create wealth.

What you can do

If you are a new investor, you must take your time. Analysing your saving, investing and spending habits is the first step- each one of those feeds into the other. Setting financial goals and a structured investment approach is the next step. There is a lot of literature online on personal finance. You can watch videos, read books or follow influential people to know more about the three critical pillars of your money. The other thing to do is get a professional financial advisor. The important thing is to get your mind over money and not the other way round.

(The author is editor-in-chief at www.moneyminute.in)

PLURALITY OF ASSET ALLOCATION

PANKAJ CHOPRA

ONE of the most difficult questions I have been asked by clients over the years has been - What is the correct asset allocation? Unfortunately, unlike in science or more so in mathematics, where whatever method you use, there is only one correct answer: there is no correct answer.

While we rely more and more on science and math, investing continues to be an art. Sensing it is bad manners to not answer a client's question (it may cost you the relationship itself), we tend to derive simple answers to a complicated question. It is obvious that we may not have all the answers upfront, and some questions may be too difficult to answer, but most of us do not have the courage to accept that in front of the client. So what can be done? This is where plurality comes in. Just as one size doesn't fit all (at least not comfortably), there is no one answer for everyone.

Fortunately, there are factors that you can assess in the quest for finding a unique asset allocation that suits you the best. These factors include the discretionary nature of money, the time horizon for investment and your risk appetite.

Firstly, let me start by saying that any loss is painful. The loss of even a Rs. 100 note fallen from your pocket hurts, so let us get this straight that there is no use putting up a brave face when the portfolio is in losses. The trick is how you manage this pain and that is what asset allocation is all about.

Secondly, and equally important is that there is no perfection here. You cannot get it right all the time. You may be lucky when a stock shoots up just when you bought it.

Apart from earning you bragging rights with your friends, it proves nothing. With the benefit of hindsight (which crystallizes the fuzzy future), you could have always done better. So use hindsight only to learn for the future, rather than fret over what you could have done better. That is a lost case.

Coming back to asset allocation, the discretionary nature of investments also means the inverse of rigidity of your goals. Some goals like saving (or paying installments) for a house, or for higher education of children are top priority and need to be met. Such liabilities reduce the room to negotiate around the asset allocation matrix. If most of these have been taken care of, or are not there in the near term future plans, then a more flexible (risky) asset allocation plan may be considered.

Time horizon for investments means that in goals like costly higher education of children or planning for post retirement income, if these are far away today, more risks can be taken so that there is opportunity to ride through a rough patch or correct a wrong decision, but if these are coming up shortly, the ability to take risks is curtailed significantly.

Lastly, risk appetite is practically impossible for others to measure for you. General comments you receive saying 'I think you can take this risk' are utterly useless and may actually be biased towards getting your investments onboard. It is in fact extremely difficult for even a highly experienced investor to get his own risk appetite right. I can attempt to give you a starting point, from where you can probably work your way forward. Please try to take as much risk, in terms of losing money, in the worst case scenario, that you can tolerate. Some people have a lot of money, but get really stressed out if they are making losses, others may have much less, but are more relaxed during trying times.

As I said, losing money hurts, but the trick is to not get anxious about it. If you are losing sleep due to your investments, your asset allocation is definitely wrong.

Asset allocation is a long term evolving exercise. Better knowledge, increasing experience, new alternatives and changing personal conditions mean that the asset allocation will need frequent revisions — and that is okay!

(The author is the founder of Five Rivers Portfolio Managers and can be reached on pankaj@5riversindia.com)

TODAY'S STOCK PICK

L&T

Current Price ₹1,502.75

Target Price ₹1,700

L&T has prioritized its balance sheet strength over growth during Covid 2.0. Management's expectation on order inflow growth in FY22, backed by a strong prospect list, margin improvement are optimistic on the stock.

— Motilal Oswal Securities Limited

Disclaimer: The views and recommendations made above are that of the individual analyst or broking company, and not that of *The New Indian Express*.

EXPRESS READ

Q1 merchandise exports may grow to $87.2 bn

New Delhi: The country's total merchandise exports are projected to grow 70.1 per cent to $87.2 billion in the first quarter of fiscal 2021-22 from $51.3 billion in the year, Export-Import Bank of India (India Exim Bank) said. The non-oil exports may jump 68.5 per cent to $78.26 billion in the April-June period. The sharp rise in exports could be attributed largely to the low base effect, pick up in global oil prices, and strong growth in advanced economies.

CPI data, IPOs to keep traders busy this week

New Delhi: Stock market enthusiasts are expected to first react to May inflation data, i.e. Consumer Price Index (CPI) and Wholesale Price Index (WPI) numbers, that are scheduled to be released on Monday. Besides, two other major events — four initial public offerings (IPOs) that will hit the market in the coming sessions and the two-day US Federal Reserve meeting that will begin on June 16 — are likely to influence markets this week.

NUMBERS DON'T LIE

Interesting facts about elite athletes funding & support

INDRANEEL DAS @Chennai

WITH less than six weeks to go for the Tokyo Olympics, top Indian athletes are putting final touches to their preparations. It has been quite a year with restrictions all around the world hampering participation and preparation, but somehow the training of our athletes, except for a brief period during complete lockdown, had been quite regular at various Sports Authority of India centres.

The funding, especially for the elite athletes, has been unhindered. At times, they have processed within hours of submission of proposals. According to information on the SAI website and other sources, some of our elite sportspersons have incurred expenditure in

PV Sindhu

crores during the last Olympic cycle.

Take for instance the four badminton players who qualified for the Olympics. Their spending under Annual Calendar for Training and Competition (ACTC) and Target Olympics Podium (TOP) Scheme has crossed the ₹3 crore-mark each. In fact, Rio Olympic silver medallist PV Sindhu heads the list of athletes to have incurred the maximum expenses during the last Olympic cycle. For her training, competitions, personal coach, support staff, etc., the amount is ₹3.82 crore (₹3.41 crore ACTC and ₹41.5 lakh under TOP Scheme). This includes the fee for foreign coach Park Tae Sang of $7000 under ACTC. She entered in about 69 competitions.

Similarly, the expenditure for doubles pair of Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy is over ₹3 crore. B Sai Praneeth is around ₹3.38 crore. All of them have played around 60-65 competitions under ACTC. Singles foreign coach Agus Dwi Santoso's salary is $7000 under ACTC. Doubles coach Mathias Boe's salary is under TOP Scheme. The expenses are beside that of other shuttlers like Saina Nehwal and Kidambi Srikanth, who had been trying to qualify and were part of TOP Scheme.

Interestingly, for some elite shooters, the funding has been between ₹1 crore to ₹1.5 crore each. Youngster Manu Bhaker needed funds to buy a Pardini sports pistol and ammunitions while Anjum Moudgil needed funds to buy electronic scoring system. Shooters Elavenil Valarivan and Apurvi Chandela did not need any funding under TOP Scheme other than the ₹50,000 per month out of pocket allowance.

In the case of Mirabai Chanu, her rehabilitation programme and training in the US last year and now would cost more that ₹1.3 crore under TOP Scheme. Her ACTC funding is around ₹99 lakh, and that includes some six competitions abroad. The SAI cleared her proposal to train in the US within six hours to avoid any inconvenience arising out of impending restrictions for those flying from India due to rising Covid cases. Her injury rehabilitation was with Dr Horschig at St. Louis, US.

Even in the case of wrestlers Bajrang Punia and Vinesh Phogat, the TOP Scheme funding is around ₹1.47 crore and ₹1.29 crore and is two to three times more than ACTC. Overall, Bajrang's expenditure is around ₹2.06 crore and Vinesh's is ₹1.81 crore. Besides funding, the SAI had apparently helped Vinesh renew her passport in Hungary.

Javelin ace Neeraj Chopra, one of the medal hopes in Tokyo, is perhaps the only one from athletics to have spent more than a crore. From hiring bio-mechanic expert and coach Bartoneitz Klaus, exposure trips, purchasing recovery and strengthening equipment and rehabilitation, the expenses incurred in the last Olympic cycle is a shade more than ₹1.61 crore. Usually ACTC takes care of most of the training and competition, including exposure trips and is drawn up by National sports federations (NSFs). Most of the athletics teams are funded through ACTC and despite some elite athletes being part of the TOP Scheme, apart from pocket money, nothing much has been sanctioned under latter.

Novak Djokovic celebrates after winning the French Open final in five sets in Paris on Sunday

1 Djokovic bounced back from two sets down in a Grand Slam final for the first time in his career. He had lost on all five previous occasions

2 Number of French Open titles won by Djokovic. His earlier victory came in 2016

3 Djokovic is just the third man in the game's history to win all four Grand Slams at least twice. The other two to have achieved the feat are Rod Laver and Roy Emerson

AFTER 19, OFF TO 20

Djokovic comes back from two sets down to beat Tsitsipas in French Open final for 19th Grand Slam title

ASSOCIATED PRESS @Paris

NOVAK Djokovic came all the way back after dropping the first two sets to beat Stefanos Tsitsipas 6-7 (6), 2-6, 6-3, 6-2, 6-4 in the French Open final Sunday for his 19th Grand Slam title.

Djokovic's second trophy at Roland Garros moves him one major championship away from tying the men's record of 20 shared by Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer.

It also puts reigning Australian Open champion Djokovic halfway to a calendar-year Grand Slam, something no man has accomplished since Rod Laver in 1969.

The 34-year-old Djokovic eliminated 13-time French Open champion Nadal in a semifinal that lasted more than four hours Friday night. That might be why the 22-year-old Tsitsipas had the upper hand early, and Djokovic looked drained for two sets. Eventually, though, he started making fewer mistakes, got his best-in-the-game returning on track, served almost flawlessly down the stretch and was able to complete his sixth career comeback from two sets down — and second of the past week.

Indeed, the International Tennis Federation said Djokovic — who trailed 19-year-old Lorenzo Musetti two sets to none in the fourth round — is the first man in the professional era to win a Grand Slam tournament after twice facing a 2-0 deficit in sets.

Experience could have been a factor, too.

This was the first major final for Tsitsipas and 29th for Djokovic, who also won the French Open in 2016, along with nine titles at the Australian Open, five at Wimbledon and three at the U.S. Open.

Of just as much, if not more, significance to the ultimate outcome Sunday: Djokovic entered the day with a 34-10 record in five-setters — including a men's-record 31 wins in Grand Slam matches of that length — while Tsitsipas was 5-4.

On a sunny and breezy afternoon, with the temperature approaching 80 degrees Fahrenheit (over 25 degrees Celsius), Tsitsipas needed just over 100 minutes to grab a big lead Sunday.

But the tenacious and talented Djokovic did not quit, grabbing early breaks in each of the last three sets.

EXPRESS READ

Milkha Singh's wife Nirmal passes away

CHANDIGARH: Former Indian women volleyball team captain Nirmal Kaur, who is the wife of sprint legend Milkha Singh, died at a Mohali hospital due to COVID-19 related complications on Sunday. She was 85 and is survived by her husband, one son and three daughters.

New Zealand complete formalities, clinch series

BIRMINGHAM: New Zealand overpowered England by eight wickets in the second Test at Edgbaston on Sunday as they sealed a 1-0 series win with more than a day to spare. Set a target of just 38 after England tailender Olly Stone was out to the very first ball of the fourth day, the Blackcaps finished on 41-2.

Brief scores: England 303 & 122 lost to New Zealand 388 & 41 for 2

Sterling opens the account for England

AFP @London

RAHEEM Sterling ignited England's Euro 2020 campaign as the Manchester City forward's clinical finish sealed a 1-0 win against Croatia in their Group D opener on Sunday. It is the first time ever that England have won their opening match of a Euro campaign.

Gareth Southgate's side was struggling to break down Croatia until Sterling struck in the second half at sun-baked Wembley. The 26-year-old's first goal at a major tournament -- in his 13th game – was the perfect riposte to critics who questioned Southgate's decision to select him instead of Jack Grealish.

Sterling has endured a chequered relationship with England fans after being hounded following his tame performances at Euro 2016. He also struggled to hold down a place with Premier League champions City this term, culminating in his lacklustre display in their Champions League final.

Rahim Sterling celebrates his goal against Croatia at the Wembled on Sunday | AFP

New-look Spain seek Swede start

SCOTLAND VS CZECH REPUBLIC | HAMPDEN PARK | 6.30PM

In a way, a new beginning for both. The Scots are back in an international event for the first time this century while Czech Republic have a collection of fine individuals after the retirement of stars. For both sides to get out of this group, they need a good result here. So expect this to be a battle of attrition.

Scotland: Andrew Robertson, **Czech Republic:** Patrik Schick

POLAND VS SLOVAKIA | KRESTOVSKY STADIUM | 9.30PM

Both sides are battling indifferent form coming into the game. The match itself, however, could be decided by the leading talents of both sides as Robert Lewandowski, the leading finisher in the sport, will likely go up against Milan Skriniar, a centre back of vast potential. However, the Poles have players who can make difference.

Poland: Lewandowski, **Slovakia:** Skriniar

SPAIN VS SWEDEN | ESTADIO DE LA CARTUJA | 12.30 AM

One of the most intriguing group stage clashes. It will be a proper clash of styles, with the Swedes expected to put every man behind the ball. For Spain, who have had a mini Covid-29 outbreak in their camp, there is quite optimism with an array of young players capable of catching the eye.

Spain: Thiago Alcantara, **Sweden:** Alexander Isak

RESULTS

Saturday: Belgium 3 (Lukaku 10, 88, Meunier 34) Russia 0

Sunday: England 1 (Sterling 57) Croatia 0

Austria 3 (Lainer 18, Gregoritsch 78, Arnautovic 89) North Macedonia 1 (Pandev 28).

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED

No. 506/BGM/SEE/Tr.(W&M)/C/EE(O)/AEE-1/21-22/F-/1551-56 Date: 11.06.2021

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation Limited, invites sealed tenders in duplicate from Manufacturer/Experience/Authorised service Agency for the following works.

Name of the Work: Repair and servicing of ABB make 20MVA, 110/11KV transformer breaker mechanism at 110KV S/S Ainapur in TL&SS, Division, KPTCL, Chikodi. Particulars Make: Particulars Make: ABB, Voltage:145KV, Type:ELFSF2-1®, S.No:10000175, Rated normal current:2000Amps, Rated S.C current: 31.5KA, Line charging breaking current: 50A, Rated lightning impulse withstand voltage Uw:650KV, Freq: 50Hz, YOM:2001, D.O.C:05.02.2003. Qty: **01 No.**

Terms and conditions: 1) Last date for receipt of completed bid is at **on 30.06.2021 at 1.30 PM**. 2) Date of time opening the bids on **30.06.2021 at 4.00 PM**. 3) The tenderer should quote their rates in the firm's letter pad & station-wise only. 4) The rates should be quoted in words and figures separately. Duly indicating all taxes and duties. 5) Service rates should be include Crane charges, DG set charges & Transportation of limbs. 6) The GSTIN &PAN number to be quoted in invariably with Photo copy of certificates. 7) The telephonic/ telegraphic fax quotation will not be accepted. 8) The tenderer should have experience/Authorized of having carried out such works. The tenderer should enclose photo copy of electrical license. 9) EMD of 1% has to be paid by Demand Draft along with quotations in the name of the undersigned. 10) The period of completion will be 30 days from the date of work awarded. The work should be commenced within 7 days and completed in one months failing which it will be presumed that you are not interested. Action will be taken for award work to alternate agency at the risk and cost of awarded agency. 11) The successful awardee should offer guarantee for a minimum period of one year work and spare utilized. 12) Details can be had from the Superintending Engineer (Ele), Tr(W&M), Circle, KPTCL Belagavi& the under signed reserves rights to accept or reject tender without assigning any reason.

Sd/- **Superintending Engineer (Ele.)**
Transmission (W&M) Circle, KPTCL, Nehru Nagara, Belagavi-590010, Ph: 0831-2437101 / 2437099

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Thalavaipatty Post, Salem - 636 302. Telephone : 7373704802. E-mail : aavinslmmkg@gmail.com

TENDER NOTICE

Salem Milk Union invites sealed tenders for **20** Puffed vehicles for distribution of milk to milk agents and collection of tubs for **3** years under two Cover System. The tender form can be obtained from the union by remitting Rs. 200/- by DD upto 3.00 pm on **14.07.2021** from the date of tender advertisement and the tender form can also be down loaded from **www.tenders.tn.gov.in** free of cost. The filled form should be submitted on or before **15.07.2021** by 11.00 a.m. along with EMD. The tender will be opened on **15.07.2021** by 11.30 am.

DIPR/ 1739/TENDER/2021

GENERAL MANAGER
SDCMPU LTD., SALEM

GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT/BUILDINGS ORGANIZATION
BUILDINGS (C&M) CIRCLE, TRICHY-1
Tender Notice No.01/ 2021-22/SE/B(C&M)C/TRY, Dated: 10.06.2021
PRE QUALIFICATION APPLICATION TENDER / ITEM WISE RATE TENDER (TWO COVER SYSTEM)
FORM OF CONTRACT : LUMPSUM

For and on behalf of the Governor of Tamilnadu, the Superintending Engineer PWD, Buildings (C & M) Circle, Trichy, invites sealed tender for the following work at his Office upto 3.00 PM on 23.07.2021 in two sealed covers. The Pre-Qualification application will alone be opened at 3.30 PM on the same day.

Sl. No	Name of Work	Approx. value of work in Lakhs (including GST @ 12%)	Amount of Earnest Money Deposit (in Rupees)	Tender Schedule available date	Period of completion
1	Construction of Collectorate Building for Mayiladuthurai District in Mayiladuthurai	Rs.10003.30	Rs.50,11,700/-	From 17.06.2021 to 22.07.2021 Upto 5.45 PM	18 Months

1. Tender Documents can be downloaded at free of cost from the following websites **www. tntenders.gov.in & www.tenders.tn.gov.in**
2. The officer in favour of the EMD should be remitted to : Executive Engineer, PWD., Buildings (C&M) Division, Nagapattinam
3. Minimum Eligibility of the Contractors: Class I contractors Registered in PWD Above Rs.75 lakhs.
4. Details regarding the class of tenderers, Tender specification and other conditions are available in the above website.
5. Price Adjustment Clause is applicable for the above work
6. Any Clarification will be entertained during office hours on working days at the office of the Superintending Engineer, PWD, Buildings Construction and maintenance Circle, PWD campus, Contonment, Trichy, may contact office over Phone No. 0431-2462604.

DIPR/1748/Tender/2021 **Superintending Engineer, PWD, Buildings (C&M) Circle, Trichy-1.**

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

INVITATION FOR TENDERS
(Only through e-Procurement Portal)

BWSSB invites Tenders from Registered agencies for the following works.

Office of the Chief Engineer(East), 7th Floor, Kaveri Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bengaluru - 560009.

Sl. No.	Division	IFT Number	Amount Put to Tender(Rs.) / EMD Amount (Rs.)	Last date and time for submission of tender	Date and time for opening of tender
1	SE-1	BWSSB/EE(SE)-1/PB/ 231/2021-22 Date: 08.06.2021	3,94,469/-	29.06.2021 upto 5.00 P.M.	30.06.2021 after 5.30 P.M.
			9,900/-		
2			11,44,443/-		
			28,650/-		
3			12,77,906/-		
			31,950/-		
4			17,83,567/-		
			44,600/-		

Sd/- Executive Engineer (SE-1)

Office of the Chief Engineer (Design), 9th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bangalore - 560009

Sl. No.	Division	IFT Number	Amount Put to Tender(Rs.) / EMD Amount (Rs.)	Date to Confirm POI in Auction	Start date & time of Evaluation	Date and Time of Live Auction
5	DC& BVM	BWSSB/EE(DC&BVM)/PB/ 312/2021-22 Date: 05.06.2021 (e-Auction)	43,920/- (EMD Amount)	22.06.2021 upto 12.00 noon	23.06.2021 at 12.00 noon	25.06.2021 at 11.00 a.m.
6		BWSSB/EE(DC&BVM)D/PB/BVM /369/2021-22 Date: 08.06.2021	47,32,875/-	23.06.2021 upto 4.00 Hrs.		25.06.2021 at 12.00 noon
			94,658/-			
7		BWSSB/EE(DC&BVM)D/PB/BVM 371/2021-22 Date: 08.06.2021	47,03,928/-			
			94,079/-			

Sd/- Executive Engineer (DC&BVM)

Sl. No.	Division	IFT Number	Amount Put to Tender(Rs.) / EMD Amount (Rs.)	Last date and time for submission of tender	Date and time for opening of tender
8	QA	BWSSB/EQA/JE/157/2021-22 Date: 09.06.2021	71,47,628/-	21.06.2021 upto 5.00 Hrs.	23.06.2021 at 11.00 a.m.
			1,43,000/-		

Sd/- Executive Engineer (QA)

Office of the Chief Engineer (WWM), 5th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bangalore - 560009

Sl. No.	Division	IFT Number	Amount Put to Tender(Rs.) / EMD Amount (Rs.)	Last date and time for submission of tender	Date and time for opening of tender
9	STP-A.Valley	BWSSB/ESATE/TO/125/2021-22 Date: 08.06.2021 **(For ST Category)**	28,37,900/-	28.06.2021 upto 16.00 Hrs.	30.06.2021 after 11.00 a.m.
			28,500/-		

Sd/- Executive Engineer (STP-A.Valley)

The details regarding the tender and participatin in the e-procurement process can be obtained by logging on to **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in** For further details contact the undersigned office during working hours.

DIPR/DDU/JA/524/2021-22

COVID-19 - DON'T SPREAD RUMOURS. ACT RESPONSIBLY, AVOID INFECTION-NOT THE INFECTED.

Wear Mask | 6 Feet Follow Physical Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene

QuoteExpress

ONCE A NEW TECHNOLOGY ROLLS OVER YOU, IF YOU'RE NOT PART OF THE STEAMROLLER, YOU'RE PART OF THE ROAD › STEWART BRAND

Chamoli avalanche hit valley floor like '15 atomic bombs'

Scientific assessment of Uttarakhand disaster details impact of slide of rock & ice that killed dozens and damaged hydro projects

The remains of a dam (centre) along a river in Tapovan of Chamoli district on February 8 after the avalanche a day earlier | AFP

RESEARCH

The impact of a massive avalanche from the Ronti Peak in the Chamoli district of Uttarakhand in February has been detailed by an international team of more than 50 researchers in a recent assesment published in Science.

The avalance set in motion a cascade of events that killed at least 70 people and damaged two hydropower projects. Scientists have now reconstructed what happened with the help of remote sensing data, eyewitness videos, seismic data and and field observations.

The team calculated that nearly 27 million cubic metres of rock and ice "detached" from the north face of the 6,063 metre-tall Ronti Peak and was in a minute-long descent. When the mass hit the Ronti Gad valley floor, about 1,800 metres below, it "released the energy equivalent to 15 Hiroshima atomic bombs," the BBC reported on Sunday.

The mass of rock and ice was 10 times the volume of Egypt's Great Pyramid of Giza, the BBC reported.

"The ratio of rock and ice was about 80% to 20%, and that ratio, combined with the incredible fall height of almost 2km, was able to provide enough heat, through all the friction from the disintegrating rock, to almost fully melt the ice and turn it to water," Dr Dan Shugar from the University of Calgary, Canada, told the BBC.

"This was critical in transforming what otherwise would have been a regular rock avalanche into something that was hyper-mobile and able to travel tens of kilometres to even lower elevations," Dr Shulgar, the team leader, added.

After the impact, the material immediately sprayed the nearby hills with large boulders, some even up to 10 metres wide. The avalance also created a powerful air blast that flattened about 20 hectares of forest.

Moving debris

Though such fallen matterial tends to remain in place, the Chamoli disaster saw the debris move downslope "with the consistency of a concrete mix."

"The high loss of human life and infrastructure damage was due to the debris flow, and not the initial rock and ice avalanche. However, not all large, high-mountain rock and ice avalanches transform into highly mobile debris flows that cause destruction far from their source," the scientists wrote.

They also downplayed any link to climate change, saying that evidence remained elusive.

"Pinpointing a specific trigger is very difficult. What we do know is that this giant wedge of rock that ultimately collapsed was starting to slide over the preceding four years. Satellite (archive) pictures showed it had slipped several tens of metres. Unfortunately, no human had picked up on this," Co-author Prof Jeffrey Kargel from the Planetary Science Institute told the BBC.

The authors of the study emphasised the risks of expanding hydropower projects in such regions.

They also said that the mountain "is riven with planes and points of structural weakness, and further bedrock failures as well as large ice and snow avalanches are inevitable."

EXFILE • CLIMATE CHANGE

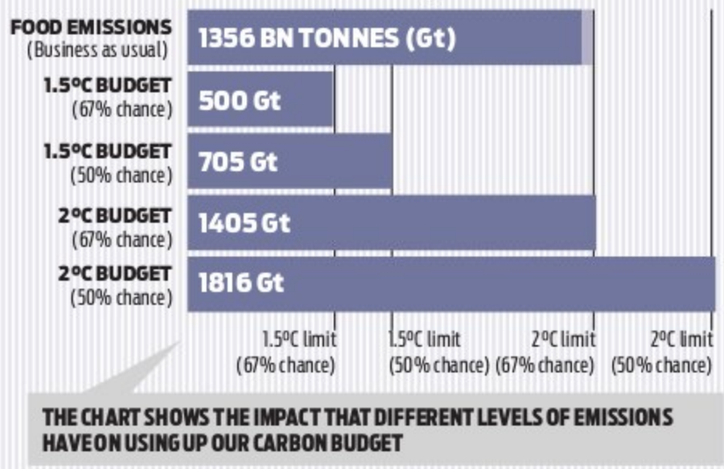
Food alone can push our warming planet to the brink

Efforts to slow global warming centre on switching from fossil fuel-based energy sources to renewable ones. But what is worryingly missing from the public discourse is the role of food systems — from cutting down trees for farmland to emissions from fertilisers, manure and cattle. A study estimates that even if we stop all non-food emissions at once, food emissions can effectively use up the 2°C carbon budget Earth has (see Fig 1) before it irrevocably crosses the global warming threshold

75% OF GLOBAL GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS ENERGY ACCOUNTS FOR

25% OF GLOBAL GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS FOOD ACCOUNTS FOR

FIGURE 1: ESTIMATES OF GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IN GIGATONNES (GT) FROM GLOBAL FOOD PRODUCTION, FOR 2020 TO 2100



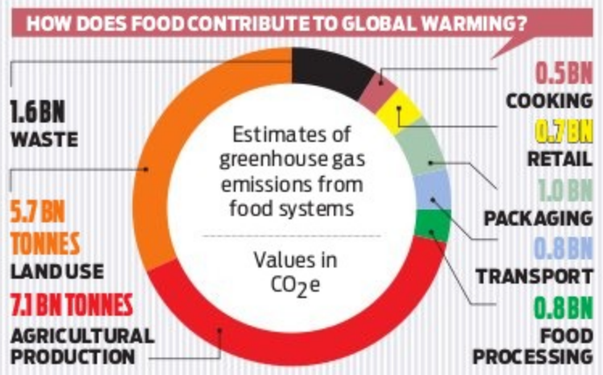
THE CHART SHOWS THE IMPACT THAT DIFFERENT LEVELS OF EMISSIONS HAVE ON USING UP OUR CARBON BUDGET

Source: "Global food system emissions could preclude achieving the 1.5° and 2°C climate change targets", Clark M et al., *Science*, November 2020; Ritchie H, Our World in Data

EXPLAINER FOR FIGURE 1

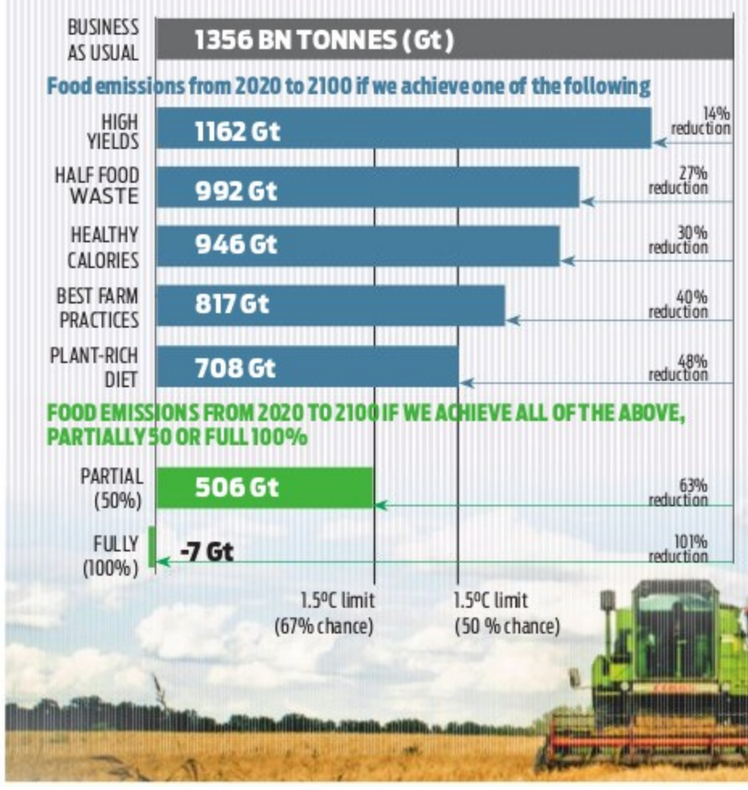
The chart shows the two scenarios of 1.5°C warming and 2°C — the carbon budget we have before warming becomes uncontrollable. The figures for % chance estimate the likelihood of using up the budget. All values are in carbon dioxide-equivalents (CO_2e, which includes CO_2, CH_4 and N_2O)

HOW DOES FOOD CONTRIBUTE TO GLOBAL WARMING?



Source: "Food systems are responsible for a third of global anthropogenic GHG emissions", Crippa M, Solazzo, E, Guizzardi, D et al., *Nature*, March 2021; Ritchie H, Our World in Data

HOW TO SAVE OURSELVES: THE CHART SHOWS THE RANGE OF INTERVENTIONS POTENTIALLY AVAILABLE TO US IN ORDER TO REDUCE EMISSIONS



EXPLAINER

HIGH YIELDS: In the first scenario, Clark et al. assume that crop yields are increased by 150%, which requires considerable progress in crop genetics

FOOD WASTE: Food waste has a staggering cost to the planet. At least 6% of greenhouse gas emissions — three times that of aviation — comes from wasted food. Researchers assume food wastage will be halved

HEALTHY CALORIES: Healthy eating habits will also cut emissions by reducing food demand in terms of calories

BEST FARM PRACTICES: Better farm practices can slash greenhouse gas emissions from fertilisers and the like

PLANT-RICH DIET: A plant-rich diet is one of the best ways to reduce emissions, meaning that meat and dairy consumption would decline but not be eliminated. In fact, countries such as India could actually seen an increase in meat intake if this diet is adopted

COMPILED BY: ARAVINDAKSHAN S

Diabetes drug may treat lung inflammation

RESEARCH

BLOOD sugar-lowering drug Metformin can prevent pulmonary or lung inflammation, a major factor in Covid-19 severity and mortality, researchers have found in studies of mice infected by the coronavirus.

Metformin is often used as an early therapy for Type-2 diabetes. It works by lowering glucose production in the liver. But scientists have also noted that metformin possesses anti-inflammatory properties.

The researchers focussed on a mouse model of acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS), a life-threatening condition for Covid patients in which fluids leak into lungs, making breathing difficult.

The findings in *Immunity* showed that metformin administered to mice prior to or after exposure to bacterial endotoxin, a surrogate for bacterial pneumonia, resulted in the inhibition of ARDS onset and lessening of its symptoms.

Metformin also produced a marked reduction in mortality in endotoxin-challenged mice and inhibited IL-1beta production and inflammasome assembly within alveolar macrophages — immune cells found in the lungs.

MANY SHADES

A civic worker walks under an art installation of colourful umbrellas in Mumbai, Maharashtra, on Sunday | AFP

EMA official says EU may ditch Astra shots

MEDICINE

ROME: A top official in the European Medicines Agency said it might be worth abandoning AstraZeneca's coronavirus vaccine for all age groups where alternatives are available, in an interview published Sunday.

Marco Cavaleri, the EMA's head of vaccine strategy, also told Italy's La Stampa newspaper that the Johnson & Johnson jab should be preferentially used for the over 60s.

Both so-called viral vector vaccines are authorised for everyone over 18 but have been dogged by reports of rare blood clots. The EU has also authorised two mRNA vaccines, Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna.

Italy on Saturday restricted AstraZeneca vaccines to people aged 60 and over following concerns about the heightened health risks for younger people.

Asked if it would not be better to ban AstraZeneca including for the over 60s, Cavaleri said: "Yes, and it is an option that many countries, such as France and Germany, are considering in the light of the increased availability of mRNA vaccines.

"However, incidents were very rare and after the first dose. It is true that there is less data on the second dose, but in the United Kingdom it (the vaccination programme) is going well."

He added: "Among young people the risks of illness decrease, and the message for them could be to use preferentially the mRNA vaccines, but the choice is left to individual states."

He noted the single-shot Johnson & Johnson vaccine has "fewer problems than AstraZeneca" while noting it had been less widely used.

"With one dose it is useful for some categories that are difficult to reach, but it remains an adenovirus (vaccine) and it is preferable to reserve it for the over 60s," he said.

Messenger RNA genetic technology trains the body to reproduce spike proteins, similar to that found on the coronavirus.

Viral vector vaccines like AstraZeneca and Johnson & Johnson use genetically-engineered version of a common-cold causing adenovirus as a "vector" to shuttle genetic instructions into human cells.

FACT OF THE MATTER

Covid alarm device tested

RESEARCH

Electronic devices may soon be used to identify the presence of infection in a crowded space using body odour profiles after scientists in the UK have tested a so-called "COVID alarm". Early studies by scientists at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) and Durham University show that COVID-19 infection has a distinct smell, resulting from changes in the volatile organic compounds (VOC) which make up the body odour ' generating an odour "fingerprint" that the sensors can detect. The study tested devices with organic semi-conducting (OSC) sensors, which could potentially be used as a COVID-19 screening tool. The preprint study,used body odour samples from socks worn by 54 individuals.

Impact of ear phones on kids

HEALTH

Increased usage of headphones, earbuds likely to raise hearing troubles in children as their auditory system maturation is incomplete, warn experts. Children and young adults are listening to many hours of music daily at volumes exceeding the globally recommended public health limit of 70 decibels of average leisure noise exposure for a day for a year. "Nonoccupational noise exposure in everyday life comes from a handful of noise sources: personal listening systems, especially for younger people; transit noise, home appliances; power tools; and entertainment (sports events, movies, parties)," said Daniel Fink, from The Quiet Coalition, a US-based nonprofit.

POLYMER FILM

Scientists create spider silk-like material to replace plastics

TECHNOLOGY

LONDON: Researchers have created a plant-based, sustainable, scalable material that could replace single-use plastics in many consumer products. The researchers, from the University of Cambridge in the UK, created a polymer film by mimicking the properties of spider silk, one of the strongest materials in nature.

The new material is as strong as many common plastics in use today and could replace plastic in many common household products.

The material was created using a new approach for assembling plant proteins into materials which mimic silk on a molecular level.

The energy-efficient method, which uses sustainable ingredients, results in a plastic-like free-standing film, which can be made at industrial scale.

Non-fading 'structural' colour can be added to the polymer, and it can also be used to make water-resistant coating.

The material is home compostable, whereas other types of bioplastics require industrial composting facilities to degrade. In addition, the material requires no chemical modifications to its natural building blocks, so that it can safely degrade in most natural environments, said researchers.

Spider silk is stronger than steel and tougher than Kevlar, but making it in a lab is notoriously difficult

The results are reported in *Nature Communications*.

As part of his protein research on Alzheimer's disease, Professor Tuomas Knowles in Cambridge's Yusuf Hamied Department of Chemistry and his team became interested in why materials like spider silk are so strong when they have such weak molecular bonds.

"We found that one of the key features that gives spider silk its strength is the hydrogen bonds are arranged regularly in space and at a very high density," said Knowles.

The researchers successfully replicated the structures found on spider silk by using soy protein isolate (SPI), a protein with a completely different composition. The new technique uses an environmentally friendly mixture of acetic acid and water, combined with ultrasonication and high temperatures, to improve the solubility of the SPI.

This method produces protein structures with enhanced inter-molecular interactions guided by the hydrogen bond formation.

Drone for lockdown-monitoring

TECHNOLOGY

A fleet of 60 drones has been deployed in the southern Chinese city of Guangzhou to keep people indoors and remind those going out to wear masks. China has largely stamped out cases of local COVID-19 transmission, but Guangzhou has seen a flare-up of the more infectious delta variant of the virus, initially discovered in India. Six new cases were reported in Guangzhou over the previous 24 hours, raising the number in the outbreak to more than 100. The police-operated drones carry cameras and broadcast messages to people venturing outdoors that they and others are best protected by staying inside. The flying unmanned vehicles add to an already dense layer of monitoring including cellphone health confirmations, temperature checks and quarantines for those living in or travelling to areas where the risk of infection is considered high. Gungzhou has isolated several neighborhoods and restricted travel out of the city.

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14•06•2021
MONDAY

DAY'S DIARY

Film release

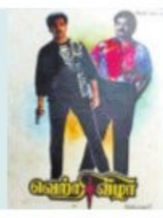
The Bourne Identity, an action-thriller film based on Robert Ludlum's 1980 novel of the same name, released on this day in 2002

PLOT

It stars Matt Damon as Jason Bourne, a man suffering from psychogenic amnesia and attempting to discover his true identity amidst a clandestine conspiracy within the CIA

THE SERIES

This was the first installment in the Jason Bourne film series. It was followed by *The Bourne Supremacy* (2004), *The Bourne Ultimatum* (2007), *The Bourne Legacy* (2012), and *Jason Bourne* (2016)



TAMIL ADAPTATION

Thirteen years before the series began, in 1989, Kamal Haasan and Prabhu's *Vetri Vizha*, was adapted from Robert Ludlum's *The Bourne Identity*

Tej Charanraj attempts to create own niche

PG 4

Move over tofu and paneer, tempeh is slowly gaining popularity as a source of plant-based protein among Bengalureans

Taste of Tempeh

Expert speak

Dietician Dr Sowmya Bharani recommends tempeh to her clients, particularly athletes and triathletes, not just because of the of protein, but quality too. "It has a high number of amino sources and since it is fermented, the protein is easily digested and absorbed as well," says the CEO of Nutrigeneus.

SIMRAN AHUJA

HAVING lived with asthma all her life, Shimsha Suhas has always had to deal with dietary restrictions, including staying away from both paneer and meat. With two important sources of protein ruled out, the 41-year-old has always kept an eye out for plant-based protein - which she easily found on trips abroad, but struggled to find back home. That is, until last year when she got her hands on tempeh.

A cake-like food made out of fermented soybeans, tempeh is said to originate in Java, Indonesia, and is slowly becoming a popular in kitchens in Bengaluru. It is consumed in ways similar to paneer and tofu in their respective cultures. For Suhas, tempeh is now a regular ingredient in dishes like upma and mushroom curry at least thrice a week. "Since tempeh is fermented, it's easier to digest and helps a lot with energy levels and gut issues," she says.

While meat meets the protein needs of those who consume it, vegetarians often turn towards soya chunks or paneer. "Tempeh actually outweighs both of them in terms of benefits," says Siddharth Ramasubramanian, founder and CEO of Hello Tempayy, which launched its new offering in March, and has four ready-to-cook variants which can be grated to make cutlets or used in cube form in curries and wraps.

"Soya chunks have high carb content (33 g per 100 g), while tempeh has 10 g per 100 g, of which 8.5 g is fibre. Similarly, when compared to paneer, tempeh has lower saturated fats (unhealthy fats), with 1.4 g instead of paneer's 14 g per 100 g," says Ramasubramanian, who believes that tempeh addresses the protein gap in daily meals.

Tempeh isn't exactly new in Bengaluru's food scene. Tempe Wala was launched in 2018 by Vaibhav Krishnaswamy. The first six months saw zero sales despite attempts at creating awareness about the product. Now Krishnaswamy is seeing sales to the tune of 5-10 kg of tempeh a day through Tempe Wala and 2-3 kg through another platform called Vegan Heat. "Most of those buying tempeh are fitness enthusiasts looking for an alternative to animal protein - which is known to have trans fat and impact cholesterol - for their protein intake," he explains.

Hello Tempayy has noticed a similar audience. According to Ramasubramanian, besides fitness enthusiasts (mostly vegetarian and semi-vegetarian), mothers wanting to give their family optimal nutrition and foodies looking to try something new also figure on the list. And the base is only set to grow.

"The next generation of consumers, those who will turn 21 in five years, watched Game Changers (a documentary about meat, protein and strength) at 14 and celebrated Earth Day by planting saplings at 10. Their consciousness about taste, health, and mixing old and new ingredients, is different from what it was 10 years ago," he says.

A 30-year-old Bengalurean with Punjabi roots hopes to make it big in the city with his mix of rap and pop music

A PUNJABI 'QUAKE'

SANATH PRASAD

BENGALURU is home to all kinds of musicians and 30-year-old **Arjun Sharma**, who goes by the stage name Quake, is keen on making it as a rapper with his own style that includes a bit of pop music.

"My roots are in Punjab, however I am a Bengaluru boy. My focus is to deliver commercial music. I want to put the city back on the map with my own style of rap with a mix of pop music," says Sharma.

In 2019, he released his first song *Sab Kuch Chahiye* (meaning I want it all) as a part of Homienathans, a Bengaluru-based rap group with his friends Adi Dhar and Devak Kamath. They released four tracks including *soneYEAH* which he says received a good response. He broke away from the group last year as his friends got busy with work.

His earliest attempts at writing rap were met with much criticism, including from a close friend, Sharma says. "This was a painful moment," he says. But when they saw the completed tracked before he uploaded it on to YouTube, they were sold. "I picked up references from fellow rappers in the city and my biggest inspiration has been Raftaar. I look up to his working style. I want to present rap in a commercial form and create a niche for Hindi and Punjabi songs in Bengaluru, which is a unique experiment."

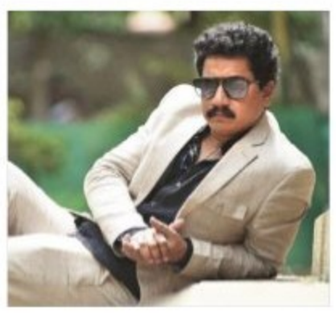
Six months ago, he released a video called Quake Wala Heat as a response to his critics. "It is a response to critics in my own creative and artistic way," says Sharma. Sharma loves to be on screen and enjoys being in the "spotlight". He has played negative roles in three Kannada movies namely *Krishna Talkies*, *Krack*, and *Kumari 21 F*.

> If things go according to plan, my music journey will be the choice. Films can wait
> Arjun Sharma, rapper

However, his heart and soul appears to be in music. "If things go according to plan, my music journey will be the choice. Films can wait," says Sharma.

In the meantime, he is working on launching his new YouTube channel Quake World in mid-July where he will release his first track. The song is called *LIT* and it is a party track with a flamboyant show of energy and visuals. His new team comprises Alex Jimmy, director and editor, Amrith Raghunathan, music producer, Vidhat Mehta, choreographer, and Sakshi Gupta, artiste, makeup, dancer, and influencer.

Sanchari Vijay injured in road accident, in ICU



CE FEATURES

NATIONAL award winner Sanchari Vijay is grievously injured in a road accident, and is currently in ICU. The incident took place on Saturday night, when Sancahri of *Naanu Avanalla Avalu* fame left on a two-wheeler after meeting his friend. He was taken to Apollo Hospital, where he is currently being treated. *Nathicharami* director, Mansore, who is currently at the hospital said, "Sanchari is under observation. Thankfully, he was taken immediately, and treated at the right time. The doctor told us to have patience and confidence. Such cases will usually take about seven days, and until then they can't give clarity."

Monika Manchanda, a city-based food writer and consultant, co-founder and chief culinary officer at LiveAltLife, dishes out fun food-related trivia in this weekly series. So, answer these three questions and find out how much of a foodie you are.

GRUB HUB

THE QUIZ WILL BE PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY

Send answers to **bengalurucityexpress@gmail.com** with the subject line **'Food quiz'**

The correct answers and names of the first three respondents are published here. Prize: The first prize winner this week will win a complimentary voucher (worth ₹1,500) on delivery from Bangalore Pizza Company.*

THE RIGHT ANSWERS

1. VV Puram; 2. Kheema Unde, Dosa ; 3. Vallombrosa Italian Cheese

FIRST THREE TO GET IT RIGHT

1. Prescilla Shanthi
2. Poonam Chhabria
3. Vishvesh Balan

***Conditions apply**

STUCK ACROSS THE BORDER

P3

SANATH PRASAD

BENGALURU has provided the source of **Thimmegowda MJ**'s livelihood and survival for 13 years now. He quit the media profession in 2018 to take up music full-time and went on to compose songs and albums with his friends in the city. However, with the economic havoc caused by the pandemic, many people have had to move back to their hometowns from Bengaluru, which, like many other large cities is depends heavily on migrants from other parts of the state and country.

Gowda, who hails from Mandya, says that he was pained by the constant criticism levelled at the city, which prompted him to come up with the song Don't blame Bengaluru.

"The pandemic took everyone by surprise. The situation was new for everybody. Yes, the virus definitely damaged the livelihoods of many people. But that does not mean you equal the city to a dangerous place and complain about not being able to survive here," says Gowda.

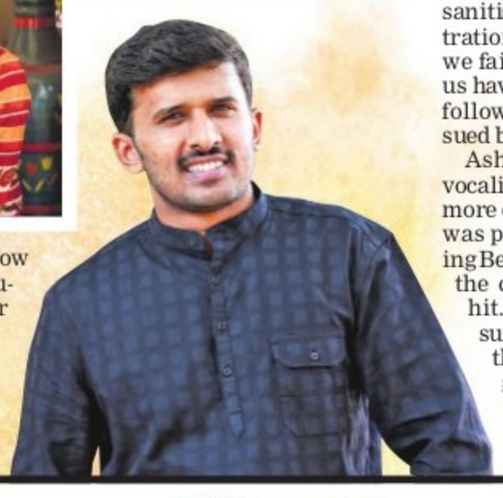
Released on YouTube on June 5, the music video got many Bengalureans emotional. "The city has welcomed a lot of people from other states and has given them a livelihood. The music video is a request to people to not speak ill about the place that has helped people grow socially and economically.

An ode to Namma Ooru

A new Kannada song by a Bengaluru-based musician urges people to show some love for the city they work in

Actor Sonu Gowda, who appeared in the video, says people should also instrospect and be vigilent about Covid

The city has been a window of opportunities for students, techies, and other working professionals from neighbouring states and also for people from other parts of India," he says.



The four-minute video starts with auto drivers, flower sellers, and daily wage workers talking about what the city means to them. The video also features prominent Kannada actors including Pranitha Subhash, **Sonu Gowda**, Vasishta Simha, Harshika Poonacha.

Actor Sonu Gowda says, "I believe as citizens we should have collective responsibility in ensuring that we follow Covid-appropriate behaviour to minimise risk. People should be rightly informed and educated on wearing masks and using sanitiser. Blaming the administration and the city is easy, but we fail to realise that many of us have been negligent towards following health protocols issued by the government."

Ashwin Sharma, one of the vocalists, believes Bengaluru is more of a feeling than a city. "It was painful when people leaving Bengaluru actually despised the city when the pandemic hit. It has been a source of survival to many. Singing this song is like giving my gratitude to the city which has given me everything," says Sharma.

GAMES FOR A CAUSE

Film Fanatic Lot, celebrates pop culture by conducting a mega quiz contest related to pop culture. The fund-raiser event will aid Covid-19 relief work like giving access to oxygen beds, medicines and food. Two members from each team can participate.
When: June 19
Details: Film Fanatic Lot Instagram page

STREETWEAR COLLECTION

Adidas has launched a new collection in collaboration with American supermodel Karlie Kloss. The new collection includes track pants and top layers for a streetwear look. The collection comes in a palette of green and black. Check them out on the Adidas website.

THEATRE TIME

Hidden in Plain Sight is a solo theatre performance by artiste Mallika Prasad that explores several aspects: From a Bollywood cabaret number to the letters of a seventeenth-century Zen monk, from the city as a mythic backdrop to cyberspace as urban wasteland. The story explores relationships, online communication and the fragility of human connection
When: June 18 **Tickets:** bookmyshow.com

GET CREATIVE

Bombay Drawing Room is introducing Lacy Ocean Waves resin art workshop with home delivered kits. The workshop will help participants learn to mix resin and play with other mixed media to create a resin art piece. The workshop also teaches you to add pigments such as acrylics, resin color pigments and more. **When:** June 20 **Details:** bookmyshow.com

LEARN THE CRAFT OF CRACKING A JOKE WITH FUNNYMAN JOHNNY LEVER IN A MONTH-LONG COURSE. **WHEN:** TILL JUNE 30 **DETAILS:**BOOKMYSHOW.COM

SOULFUL EVENING

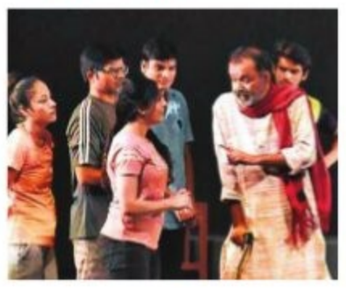
My Tirth India is presenting a devotional evening filled with soulful bhajans performed by music maestro Anup Jalota. The event will be streamed live all across the world. The duration of the event is 60 minutes. **When:** June 19, 8pm **Tickets:** bookmyshow.com

KALARI CLASSES

Sign up for Attakkalari classes online and learn the art of Kalaripayattu and other dance forms from experts. The session will focus on classes in contemporary, Kathak, Bharatanatyam, hip-hop and more. **When:** Till June 27 **Details:** bookmyshow.com

THEATRE WORKSHOP

Sign up for a theatre workshop as it trains you in exhibiting creativity and losing inhibitions. The workshop will focus on breaking habitual bound thinking, fun activities, working with rhythms, understanding the language of expressions and more.
When: June 19 **Details:** bookmyshow.com



COMBO SPECIAL

Dindigul Thalappakatti launches Mood Combos containing a wide variety of starters and main course options. Some of the combo options include BBQ celebration, playful Chinese, blissful biryani and roti delight. **Place orders on:** Swiggy/Zomato

MUSIC DAY CONTEST

Participate in the World Music Day contest with your own style and melodious rendition of modern day Bengali songs. Stand a chance to showcase your musical talent on World Music day, before Singer Raghab Chatterjee. Registrations open till June 15 **Details:** insider.in

ONLINE PILATES SESSION

Sign up for an online pilates session conducted by RedMat Pilates studio. The session will train you in fitness goals like inch loss, toning, injury rehabilitation and improving sports performance. **Duration:** 40 minutes **When:** Until June 15 **Register on** bookmyshow.com

QUICK FIX

What's cooking

IN YOUR KITCHEN?
We are hungry for recipes with minimum ingredients and maximum flavours. Share your quick-fix with us, along with step-by-step photos, at cityexpresschn@gmail.com.

RAW BANANA POWDER

INGREDIENTS

- **Raw banana:** 1 ■ **Grated coconut, Urad dal:** 2 tbsp ■ **Green chilli:** 4 ■ **Red chilli:** 2
- **Curry leaves:** Handful ■ **Mustard seeds:** 1/2 tsp ■ **Asafoetida:** 2 pinches ■ **Salt, oil**

METHOD

- Choose a banana which is fully grown and hard. Cut into 4 or 5 pieces and cook in water.
- It should not become too mushy. Prick a piece with a knife's edge. If the edge is just able to get into it easily then stop cooking.
- Cool and grate. Blend curry leaves, green chilli and asafoetida without using water, in a mixer.
- Heat oil in a pan. Add mustard seeds, urad dal, red chilli and blended paste one after the other and saute for a few seconds. Add grated banana, coconut and salt. Mix everything together gently for few a minutes and turn off the heat. Using coconut oil will enhance the taste of the dish.

— Akila Thiyagarajan, Bengaluru

FIT BIT

BHUJAPIDASANA

(SHOULDER PRESSING POSE)

In Sanskrit, 'bhuja' means shoulder, 'pida' means pressure and 'asana' means 'pose'. It is a challenging asana that requires balance, flexibility and strength in the arms, shoulders and wrists to balance on the palms with the legs wrapped around the shoulders or upper arms. It activates the Manipura (third) chakra, the body's energy and vitality center. It is to be performed under the guidance of an expert.

STEPS

- Sit with your feet about 15 inches apart on a yoga mat.
- Put your arm between your legs or under your knees.
- Come into a forward bend with your knees slightly bent.
- Bend your elbows slightly back as you would if you were heading into Chaturanga Dandasana.
- Shift your entire body weight on the hands and make the cross using both legs.
- Try to move your legs backward while keeping your head on the ground, such that they come in line with the floor.
- Snug your upper arm and shoulder as much as possible under the back of your thigh just above the knee.
- Press your hands firmly against the floor, and straighten your arms as much as possible.
- Look straight ahead. Maintain this final position and stay as long as you feel comfortable.
- To come out from this pose, bend your elbows and lightly release your feet back to the floor.

BENEFITS

- Helps with headache and mild anxiety
- Regular practice will control your heart rate and improve blood circulation.
- Strengthens your wrists, hands, chest, shoulder and your upper body.
- Tones abdominal muscles and organs.
- Strengthens the arms and tones the wrist helping build grip strength.
- Calms the mind. Promotes metabolism.
- Improves your overall balance.
- Therapeutic for certain lower back pain, indigestion and constipation.

LIMITATIONS

- If you have any shoulder, elbow, wrist, knee or lower back injuries, you should avoid this asana.
- People who have high blood pressure and suffer from cervical spondylitis, must avoid this asana.
- Pregnant women should not practise this asana.

– by N Elumalai, PhD scholar (Yoga Science) at Meenakshi Academy of Higher Education & Research, Chennai

SOUND BOARD

SPILLED MILK
If you're a food lover, then this one's for you. The podcast from writer-cum-comedians Molly Wizenberg and Matthew Amster-Burton has the pair ruminating on a particular food delicacy laced with humour and anecdotes.
- On Apple Podcasts

AMAZING WILDLIFE
From blobfish to sea otters, this educational series highlights the wonders and diversity of the animal kingdom. It makes it fun for wildlife enthusiasts with interesting trivia. The episodes also feature fun and insightful facts about the world's most fantastic animals.
- On Apple Podcasts

THINK FAST, TALK SMART: COMMUNICATION TECHNIQUES
Whether you're giving a toast or presenting in a meeting, communication is critical to success in business and in life. Join Matt Abrahams, a lecturer of Strategic Communication at Stanford Graduate School of Business, as he sits down with experts in the field to discuss real-world challenges.
- On Google Podcasts

EVERYTHING IS ALIVE
Everything is Alive is an unscripted interview show in which all the subjects are inanimate objects. In each episode, a different thing tells us its life story — and everything it says is true.
- On Google Podcasts

GASTROPOD
Every other week co-hosts Cynthia Graber and Nicola Twilley serve up a brand new episode exploring the hidden history and surprising science behind different food- or farming-related topics.
- On Apple Podcasts

POPULAR ON YOUTUBE

JAGUAR
Krishna, an orphan and a first-year MBBS student, dons a vigilante avatar and seemingly kills people randomly. He also tries to woo his friend's sister, Priya.
- Cast: Nikhil Gowda Deepti Sati

SEETHARAMAKALYANA
Arya, a righteous man, falls in love with a small-town woman named Geetha, unaware of the obstacles that lie ahead for both of them.
- Cast: Nikhil Gowda, Rachita Ram

MILANA
Anjali's father forces her to marry Akash. Unable to forget her past, she demands a divorce from Akash, but soon begins to fall for him.
- Cast: Puneet Rajkumar, Parvathy Thiruvothu

HEBBULI
After Ram's brother dies suddenly, he decides to investigate the reason behind his death. However, he must fight against the corrupt system to protect his family and find the truth.
- Cast: Kichcha Sudeep, Ravichandran

Scan this QR code to find out how your favourite celebs are coping with the lockdown.

WHAT'S ON TED TALKS

1 THE SEARCH FOR MICROSCOPIC ALIENS BY SARAH RUGHEIMER
Astrophysicist Sarah Rugheimer is looking for extraterrestrial microbes by studying how these single-celled organisms emit gases, which could reveal evidence of them throughout the cosmos. She identifies two big hurdles to confirming life on another world.

2 THE CURE FOR BURNOUT (HINT: IT ISN'T SELF-CARE) BY EMILY NAGOSKI AND AMELIA NAGOSKI
In an introspective and deeply relatable conversation, authors Emily and Amelia Nagoski detail three telltale signs that stress is getting the best of you — and share actionable ways to feel safe in your own body.

3 A SIMPLE BIRTH KIT FOR MOTHERS IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD ZUBAIDA BAI
In this quick, inspiring talk, TED Fellow Zubaida Bai presents her clean birth kit in a purse, which contains everything a new mother needs for a hygienic birth and a healthy delivery — no matter where in the world (or how far from a medical clinic) she might be.

4 THE SIMPLE POWER OF HAND-WASHING BY MYRIAM SIDIBE
Myriam Sidibe is a warrior in the fight against childhood disease. Her weapon of choice? A bar of soap. For cost-effective prevention against sickness, it's hard to beat soapy hand-washing, which cuts down risk of pneumonia, diarrhea, cholera and worse. Sidibe, a public-health expert, makes a smart case for public-private partnerships to promote clean hands — and local, sustainable entrepreneurship.

5 WE NEED BETTER DRUGS — NOW BY FRANCIS COLLINS
Today we know the molecular cause of 4,000 diseases, but treatments are available for only 250 of them. So what's taking so long? Geneticist and physician Francis Collins explains why systematic drug discovery is imperative, even for rare and complex diseases, and offers a few solutions — like teaching old drugs new tricks.

NOW STREAMING

REGIONAL

ARISHADVARGA (Kannada)
An aspiring actor doubling as an amateur gigolo gets caught up in a sticky situation after accepting a surprise gift from an anonymous client. Cast: Sumyuktha Hornad, Anju Alva Naik
- Watch on: Amazon Prime Video

PARAMAPADHAM VILAYATTU (Tamil)
The local party leader gets hospitalised, Dr. Gayathri tries her best to cure him, but he dies. The leader's son is forced to take over while Dr Gayathri tells him about the conspiracy over his father's death.
Cast: Trisha, Nandha, Richard Rishi
- Watch on: Disney+Hotstar

HUM BHI AKELE TUM BHI AKELE (Hindi)
A homosexual boy. A lesbian girl. A road trip from New Delhi to Himachal which helps them discover the love in friendship.
Cast: Zareen Khan, Anshuman Jha, Gurfateh Pirzada, Janhvi Rawat
- Watch on: Disney+Hotstar

KAVACHA (Kannada)
Jayarama, who is visually challenged, agrees to be the guardian of a young girl, Meenakshi, after her father is murdered. Soon, he finds himself battling a serial killer whose new target is Meenakshi.
Cast: Shiva Rajkumar, Isha Kopikkar, Ravi Kale, Kruthika Jayakumar
- Watch on: Disney+Hotstar

NIZHAL (Malayalam)
John Baby, who is recouping from a traumatic accident, meets Nitin, a young boy who interests him with murder stories. When Baby explores the possibility of Nitin's stories by mapping the events, it corresponds with the actual incidents.
Cast: Nayanthara, Kunchako Boban, Aadhya Prasad, Divya Prabha
- Watch on: Amazon Prime Video

All the streaming apps can be accessed on smartphones and smart TVs with Internet connection.

BHADRAM (Telugu)
A young detective is asked to keep an eye on a certain number of people and collect information on them. However, his subjects start dying mysteriously.
Cast: Ashok Selvan, Janani Iyer, Kaali Venkat, Jaya Prakash
- Watch on: Disney+Hotstar

FREEDOM AT MIDNIGHT (Malayalam)
After Jacob gets imprisoned for the alleged murder of a police officer, he decides to befriend his fellow inmates and makes plans with them to break out.
Cast: Antony Varghese, Chemban Vinod Jose, Vinayakan, Arya Salim
- Watch on: Netflix

ENGLISH

RAYA AND THE LAST DRAGON
Raya, a warrior, sets out to track down Sisu, a dragon, who transferred all her powers into a magical gem which is now scattered all over the kingdom of Kumandra, dividing its people.
Cast: Gemma Chan, Sandra Oh, Alan Tudyk, Awkwafina
- Watch on: Disney+Hotstar

BOMBSHELL
Having had enough of her boss's sexual harassments, Gretchen Carlson files a lawsuit against Fox News founder Roger Ailes. Her bravery triggers a domino effect, culminating into a liberation movement.
Cast: Charlize Theron, Nicole Kidman, Margot Robbie, John Lithgow
- Watch on: Lionsgate Play

SWEET TOOTH (series)
On a perilous adventure in a post-apocalyptic world, a boy who's half-human and half deer searches for a new beginning with a gruff protector.
Cast: Christian Convery, Nonso Anozie, James Brolin, Wil Forte
- Watch on: Netflix

THE MAURITANIAN
A defense attorney, her associate and a military prosecutor uncover a far-reaching conspiracy while investigating the case of a suspected 9/11 terrorist imprisoned at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, for six years.
Cast: Jodie Foster, Tahar Rahim, Shailene Woodley, Benedict Cumberbatch
- Watch on: Amazon Prime Video

SUBSCRIPTION
Prime Video: ₹ 129 per month
Zee 5: ₹ 99 per month
Netflix: ₹ 199 per month

BEYOND BORDERS

Borderlands - a documentary about how everyday lives intertwine with borders in the Indian subcontinent, is part of one of the largest crowdfunding campaigns. The film will now have its world premiere at DOK.fest München - one of the oldest and largest documentary festivals in Europe

In a span of one-and-a-half years, we visited a few places, including a Pakistan migrant settlement in Jodhpur, a shelter home near the India-Bangladesh border where girls rescued from cross-border trafficking await repatriation, and my hometown, which was in the news in 2015 due to a terrorist attack

Samarth Mahajan, co-producer of documentary

SUDESHNA DUTTA

While the Indian borders are usually a sensitive topic of conversation, there is also an underlying aura of suspense around it. "Whenever we talk about borders, the images that usually come to mind are that of the army, war or terrorists. What gets missed are the images of people who live in these areas and those who get affected by borders – they have a lot of emotional and important stories to tell," says Samarth Mahajan, who hails from Dinanagar, a small town close to the India-Pakistan border.

An IIT Kharagpur graduate, the 30-year-old director of Borderlands tells CE that he wanted to break the stereotypical discussions about cross-border relationships. In his hour-long documentary, he has also focused on the reality of people from different communities who were forced to leave their hometowns under different circumstances and become migrants in an unknown land. "In a span of one-and-a-half years, we visited a few places, including a Pakistan migrant settlement in Jodhpur, a shelter home near the India-Bangladesh border where girls rescued from cross-border trafficking await repatriation, and my hometown, which was in the news in 2015 due to a terrorist attack," says the co-producer of the documentary, who is part of team Camera And Shorts. Being a partly crowdfunded project that had featured at the Cannes Film Market in 2020, the film's India premiere at MAMI Mumbai Film Festival was postponed due to the pandemic last year. It will, most likely, be now held in October 2021.

His conversations with his mother in the film show us how a homemaker in a border area reacts to conflict, cross-border violence, and the possibility of a war. "It is a kaleidoscope of stories in regional languages that show people's efforts to find meaning in a world that is beyond their control," he adds. Giving us a sneak peek, Mahajan describes a particular scene where hundreds of separated family members get to meet each other at the partition once in 365 days. "Called Milan Mela, the event is all about seeing your mother, father, brothers and sisters across the border fence, after eagerly waiting for a whole year. The feeling is unparalleled," he says. But like an interviewee in the documentary says, "When the fence came, it divided the land. But it couldn't divide hearts."

Weighing in on the significance of the feature, Devaiah Bopanna, co-founder of All Things Small, who is also one of the producers of the documentary, says, "I'm always on the lookout for true stories and this one ticked all the boxes. This is the first time you will see a geo-political issue without any actual politics. There are lines that have been marked by a third party, which eventually ends up controlling the lives of these people," says the Bengalurean.

PAIRED WITH PANACHE
Anuja Pandey

'Highlights' of the times

Every beauty aficionado's dream is to glow like light and have a halo around them. Apart from right skin care, good diet and habits that bequeath good skin, the dewy look can be acquired with the stoke of a highlighter in a matter of few seconds. Kim Kardashian brought in the trend of highlights and contouring a decade ago, and this has been much-loved ever since. Who doesn't love the defined and accentuated look it gives? The trending glass skin on Instagram implies highlighters are a must in every vanity box.

Kinds of highlighters

1. **Cream:** A translucent strobe cream to give you that perfectly juicy skin
2. **Liquid serum:** If you are a pro at makeup, then use it with a dropper and glide it over your face for the radiance
3. **Pressed powder:** Most of us use this with a fan brush for the perfect sheen. Don't over do it or you will end up with a raver sparkle
4. **Cream powder duo:** The flawless finish of the powder and a glow from within is what this highlighter creates.

You can use lighter tones from the temple to cheek and a darker shade for the cheekbones for dimension and shape

Skin tone and choice of highlighters

Indians have a warm skin tone, allowing for experimentation with any kind of make up. Yet, it's an arduous task to select the right shade of highlighters. **Navreet Josan**, national artist, MAC Cosmetics India, says, "Pick the right shade of highlighter. A colour that's too light will stand out glaringly and not blend with your skin. A highlighter that's too warm will look too bronzy. Choose a shade that's a few shades lighter than your skin tone so it blends seamlessly."

She adds, "Highlight strategically. It's important to balance the shine from the highlighter with matte. Highlight the high points of your face and keep the rest of the face with a matte look."

1. **Dark skin tone:** It's the best skin tone to achieve a totally glam look with bronze, copper and gold tones accentuating the glow
2. **Neutral skin tone:** Use the highlighter brick with shades of pink going towards rose gold. The mix of shades gives a gorgeous glow to the skin
3. **Light skin tone:** Think pearls, silver and champagne tones. Zorain Khaleeli, founder Zorains Studio and Academy, says, "Choosing the right highlights are very important. They could be matte or shiny. Matte highlights create subtle elevations and look more natural. The shiny highlights create a more defined and enhanced elevation. It's a big trend in the current makeup routine now."

(The author is a social media influencer @loftyspectrums and lifestyle coach)

CITY READ

Punjabi Sabha lends helping hand

The Punjabi Sabha has been helping out during the pandemic in various ways. They starting by giving lunch and dinner to 30 ambulance teams. With marriages and social functions having come to a standstill, they delivered dry rations ration worth Rs 1,200/per bag to 36 dholak and ghodi wala families. They have also purchased an oxygen concentrator from Europe, which will be available for free to those affected by Covid. This unit can be used for five days at no cost. "The biggest requirement was to ensure that no frontline worker goes hungry. All that we have done is seva for the frontline community and those in distress" says **Jannak R Madaan**, president of the Punjabi Sabha.

All my Hearts and Prismatic Shards...

ARE YOU GAME?
Anusha Ganapathi

(This economics graduate spends her leisure time preparing for the zombie apocalypse)

Stardew Valley deserves more attention. More people should play it, play it for longer, and feel nice, warm and happy inside. Quoting the opening cutscene dialogue, this game is a gift for when "you feel crushed by the burden of modern life". So open that PC/Mobile app/Nintendo Switch and start your brand-new farm just outside the tiny Pelican Town. Reader, I really want you to play this game, although I still haven't finished it. There's a lot to do. It's difficult to find the right words. How can I tell you what I enjoy about the game if there's nothing that's amiss? It would be easier to coax you if you were an NPC in the game; I would simply gift you a Golden Pumpkin, or a Prismatic Shard, so that you'd "heart" me enough to listen to me.

Stardew Valley is inherently a patient game, in that you could always do it all over again the next day, if things don't go well today. But it also rewards you if you're efficient with your time. Doing chores and following a routine provides more serotonin in-game than it has ever done in real life.

The "routine" is not merely a strategy to get better at the game, the routine is an inherent part of the game, it was born in it, and moulded by it. And despite this grind, it manages to keep you involved through tasks, festivals, people interactions, changing seasons, fresh areas to explore, new items to craft. A lot, ok?

While the progression of the campaign is similar in both, the experience is worlds apart on whether you choose to play it alone, or with friends (co-op). Single player Stardew is an introspective, meditative experience. You want to take it slow, finish side quests, gain the trust of all citizens, and slowly renovate the Community Centre. Co-op Stardew is mostly a party, occasionally a well-oiled organisation that adheres to a routine, and a potential race to date the coolest person in Pelican Town. 8/8 rarecrows for this game that has managed to scare away the crows sucking out my brain cells of positivity.

DEVELOP DISTRICTS IN THIS CIVILIZATION

Become a leader and guide your civilization from humble beginnings in the age of antiquity into modern times

PLAY ON
Arjun Sukumaran

http://goo.gl/uNBWN3

(Arjun is a gamer, book lover and an all-round renaissance man)

When it came out in 2016, Civilization VI had pretty big shoes to fill. Not only was it the latest game in an incredibly successful and critically-acclaimed series that dated back to 1991, Civilization V had been universally hailed as one of the best games in the series till date. VI certainly suffered a little in comparison when it was released, but how does it fare five years later?

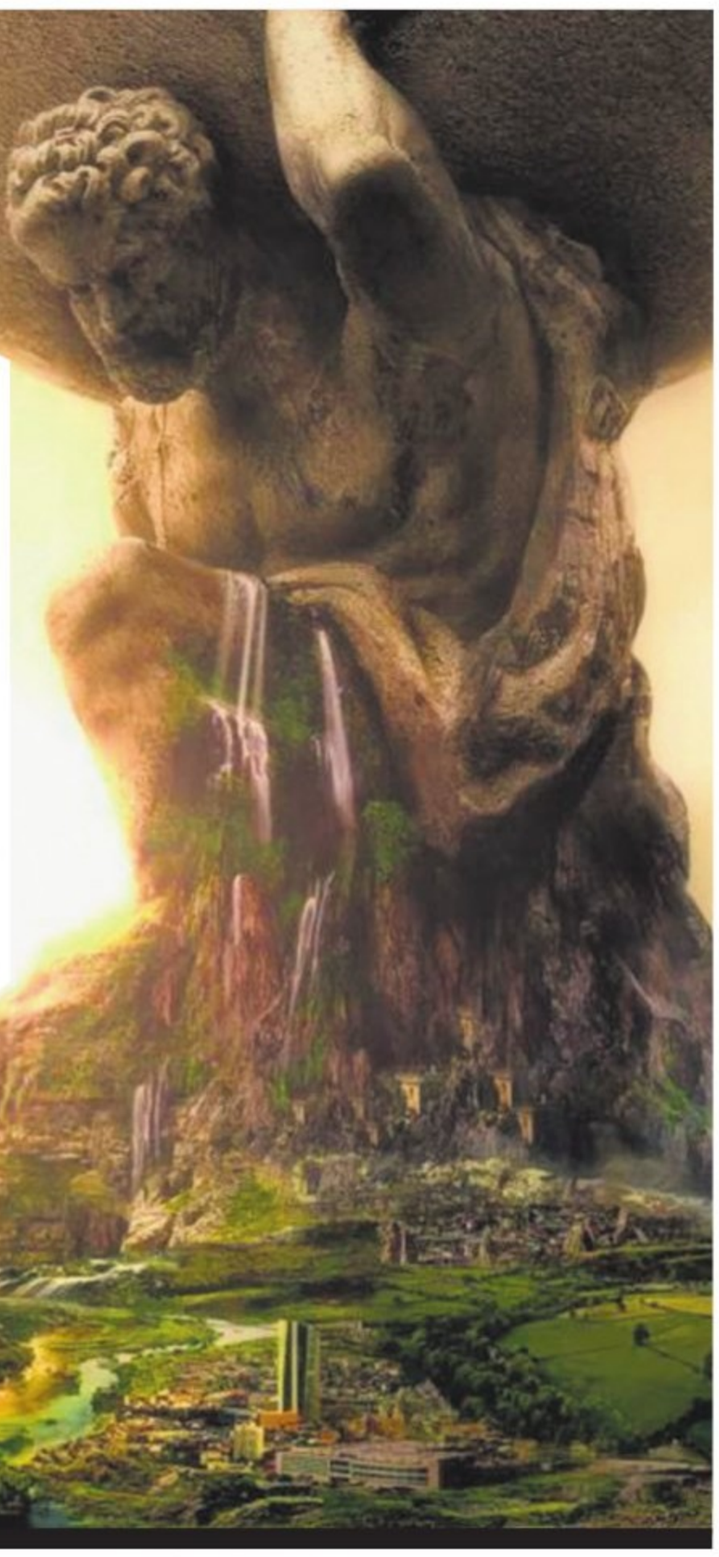
First, the basics — in Civilization VI, you take the role of a legendary historical leader, aiming to guide your civilization from humble beginnings in the age of antiquity all the way into modern times. You could be Trajan leading the Romans, for example, or perhaps Montezuma on the Aztec throne. Your warriors will begin with clubs, but they could end with laser cannons — that's the scope we're talking about here. Along the way, you'll institute society reforms, governmental changes, build wonders of the world and engage in diplomacy and warfare with the other civilizations you'll meet in each game.

The above is true of every game in the series, but Civilization VI made some notable changes to the formula. The cities you build over the course of the game are the heart of your civilization, and they saw the biggest changes — in earlier games, whatever you constructed in a particular city was in the single grid or hex where that city was located. In VI, you have to construct entire districts around your city centre in order to develop it. For example, you need a campus district before you can start constructing scientific buildings. This radically shakes up the game — now, cities sprawl

untidily over the map as districts are constantly being added and eating up available space. It's certainly more realistic than the old way of doing things, it looks fantastic on the map and it creates interesting choices that you have to make — sure, your scientists' research might benefit if you place a campus right next to that volcano, but there might be reasons to keep a safe distance as well. It's fantastic, but it certainly does take up a lot more of your brainpower than the old system ever did.

And that's a common theme with Civilization VI — it forces you to engage more with the game from a much closer point-of-view. You're still an omnipotent eye-in-the-sky, yes, but you do have to get to grips with many things that were just handwaved away earlier. Take workers, for example, the units that built just about everything for you outside your actual cities — you used to be able to automate them, and just have them build up your resource-gathering and infrastructure on their own. Now, you've got to tell them what to do and they can only do so much - forcing those decisions again. For veterans of the series, it must have felt like busywork; but coming back to it now after five years, it feels fresh and innovative.

I think Civilization VI was given a raw deal upon initial release by many people, myself included, who compared it to its illustrious predecessor. It's worth remembering, though, that Civilization V took a few years and a couple of expansion packs before it became the best it could be. Civilization VI has benefited from the same time and from some groundbreaking expansions, and it's a joy to play. Because it doesn't sit on its laurels and it tries so many new and praiseworthy things, it might just be my favourite Civilization game of all.



WHAT'S NEW?

Dungeons & Dragons: Dark Alliance

The Dark Alliance games of the early 2000s were popular action RPGs set in the Forgotten Realms; however, with the last release coming in 2004, many assumed that the series was dead. Not so — the new Dark Alliance is set in the storied region of Icewind Dale, and will feature a number of characters that will be familiar if you've read or played any of the stories set therein.

Necromunda: Hired Gun

The Warhammer universe hasn't really set the world of video gaming alight, but they're certainly giving it a go lately. Their latest effort is Hired Gun, set amidst the legendary criminal underworld of Necromunda, in which you'll play as a mercenary plumbing the depths of the dark future.

Nobin Paul

'Charlie's emotions expressed through music'

... says Nobin Paul, music director of *777 Charlie* directed by Kiran Raj and starring Rakshit Shetty along with labradors that play a pivotal role

CE FEATURES

The response to the teaser of *777 Charlie* has been stupendous, and music director Nobin Paul is overwhelmed. Released on June 6, the film's story revolves around the journey of Charlie--played by a labradormeeting with protagonist Dharma, played by Rakshit Shetty. Director Kiranraj had included a song in the teaser which struck a chord with the masses. According to Nobin, the film runs on the life of the dog, hero Rakshith, and music. "The film has been made keeping in mind international standards, with a lot of importance given to music. The expressions of the dogs have been conveyed through music," says Nobin, who found the placement of tunes a challenge.

"Since the entire movie is a journey with the film traveling from down south to Kashmir, we have kept the tunes place-specific. For example, for portions in Rajasthan or Punjab, we have gone with popular tunes of that place," says Nobin, who is through with the first half of the rerecording and is now working on the second part. One of the songs Nobin is working with along with the director, will release in July.

Nobin, who started his music career playing jingles and assisting various music directors, made his film debut in 2016 with director Satya Prakash's *Rama Rama Re*. He has been associated with *Ondalla Eradalla, Churi Katte, Devaki,* and *Katha Sangama*. The composer has come to be established with 'classy' tunes."I am open to working with 'mass' tunes. Somehow such subjects have not come my way," he says, hoping that his work in *777 Charlie* will take him to the next level. Apart from his film with Kiranraj, the music director is also associated with Lohith's *Life is Beautiful,* and another upcoming project from the director. He will also be working with *Rama Rama Re* director for his next. "For the next couple of months, my focus will be on *777 Charlie*," he signs off.

A still from the film

Tej Charanraj, the newest talent in tinsel town is following his father and actor Charan Raj's footsteps as he prepares for an action thriller helmed by debutant director, Chandan Raj

'I WANT TO JUSTIFY MY FATHER'S STARDOM'

A SHARADHAA

Tej Charanraj, who has been in the shadow of his father - well-known south Indian actor Charan Raj, is looking forward to that right launch in Kannada. And he is all set to star in Chandan Raj's debut directorial, touted to be an action thriller.

Tej, who has made a mark in Tamil with a handful of films, made a cameo appearance in Kannada director, Manju Mandavya's last film, *Shri Bharatha Baahubali*. However, he is aspiring to make a mark as a full-fledged hero here, says Tej, "The cameo in *Shri Bharatha Baahubali* was an accident. Manju Mandavya, who is a close friend of my dad, happened to see my pics and was keen to cast me. It was there that I met Chandan Raj, who worked as a co-director for the film. He was looking at making his directorial debut and pitched his story idea in a way that appealed to me. The film is now ready to go on floors," says Tej, who also adds that Chandan's script has elements based on real-life events.

Tej has been getting ready for role the last one year and is working on perfecting it, as well as getting fluent with his Kannada diction. "As a Maharashtrian, my parents resided in Chennai and we would be in Bengaluru mostly during summer holidays. Though I understand and speak Kannada, I am making sure that I get the diction right. Secondly, my dad has a huge legacy in Kannada films. Having started his career in Sandalwood as a lead actor, he holds a good name here to this day. Being his son, it is my duty to try and be as perfect as him. But that's taking time," he says.

Tej, who has a good amount of work in the Tamil industry, says it might not come in handy when he gets to be launched in Kannada or any other language. "I thought it would be easy until the director explained that the taste of Kannada audience and their expectations are completely different from a Tamil audience. What works in Tamil will not work in Sandalwood. Chandan has asked me to watch a lot of Kannada films to understand the pulse of the audience. So starting in Kannada will be something new in my career. Luckily, this pandemic lockdown has given me time to do my homework," he says.

Growing up, Tej says his father kept him away from the limelight, and wasn't allowed to accompany his father for shoots. As he makes his entry here, he's keeping in mind a piece of advice from his father: Make mistakes and only then one can learn. "Being a director's actor and maintaining discipline has been his motto, which he wants me to follow," says Tej, who aims to justify his father's stardom. "Being a star's son, talk about nepotism is bound to crop up. However, I hope people watch my performance rather than assuming I got it easy," he says.

> *Starting my career in the Kannada industry will be something new. Luckily, this lockdown has given me time to do my homework"*
>
> — Tej Charanraj, actor

Charan Raj

Tej Charanraj

MELISSA MCCARTHY'S *GOD'S FAVORITE IDIOT* WRAPS UP SHOOTING

CE FEATURES

The upcoming Netflix comedy show, *God's Favorite Idiot*, starring Melissa McCarthy and Ben Falcon, has wrapped shooting in Australia. According to reports, the team had planned to shoot 16 episodes but halted the production after shooting eight episodes. While this raised an alarm that the show is being canceled midway, sources close to the project say that rest of the episodes will be canned later.

"We've wrapped production on eight episodes of *God's Favorite Idiot,* which will premiere next year. Australia has been so welcoming to all of us and we're thankful for their hospitality," said Netflix in a statement. The statement added, "We're grateful to our creative partners Ben and Melissa, along with our amazing cast and crew for their hard work and dedication to bring this show to life."

Melissa McCarthy

Natalie Portman, Julianne Moore to star in *May December*

Natalie Portman

Julianne Moore

CE FEATURES

Actors Natalie Portman and Julianne Moore have been roped in to headline director Todd Haynes' drama film *May December.*

May December tells the story of a Hollywood actor (Portman) who travels to Maine to study a woman (Moore), who she's set to play in a film. The woman was the subject of a tabloid scandal, two decades prior, for marrying a man who is 23 years younger than her. As she and her husband ready their twin girls off to college, their family dynamic begins to unravel under the actor's lens.

The film will have a script by Samy Burch, based on a story from herself and Alex Mechanik.

The shooting of the film is expected to begin in 2022. Rocket Science will launch the international sales of the project at Virtual Cannes Market this year, while the domestic sales will be handled by UTA Independent Film Group and CAA Media Finance. Jessica Elbaum and Will Ferrell of Gloria Sanchez Productions and Christine Vachon and Pam Koffler of Killer Films will produce alongside Portman and Sophie Mas under their MountainA banner.

Portman, a three-time Oscar nominee, just completed production on Marvel's upcoming Thor: Love and Thunder.

Moore is a five-time Academy Award nominee, is currently playing in Apple's Lisey's Story.

Freya Allan

The Witcher-fame Freya Allan to headline horror-thriller *Baghead*

CE FEATURES

Actor Freya Allan, well-known for her breakout role in Netflix's *The Witcher*, will star in the upcoming horror thriller *Baghead* for Studiocanal and The Picture Company.

Baghead is director Alberto Corredor's feature adaptation of his popular short film. Christina Pamies and Bryce McGuire are adapting the script to screen.

Baghead follows a mysterious figure called Baghead, who has the power to manifest the dead and bring them back to our world for short intervals. People seek out Baghead to reconnect with their lost loved ones. However, there is a high price to be paid for contact with the deceased. Allan is all set to play the lead character, who must contend with Baghead which has a deep connection to her family's past.

The production is set to begin in Berlin this fall, with Studiocanal gearing up to commence worldwide sales at the Cannes Market.

Picture Company's Alex Heineman and Andrew Rona will produce, along with Vertigo's Roy Lee (It), who will serve as executive producer with Alibi's Jake Wagner. Creators of the short film, Corredor and Lorcan Reilly, will also serve as executive producers. Studiocanal's Ron Halpern, Shana Eddy and Rachel Henchosberg are set to oversee.

Meanwhile, Allan will also be seen in the upcoming Stu action thriller *Gunpowder Milkshake* for Netflix.